

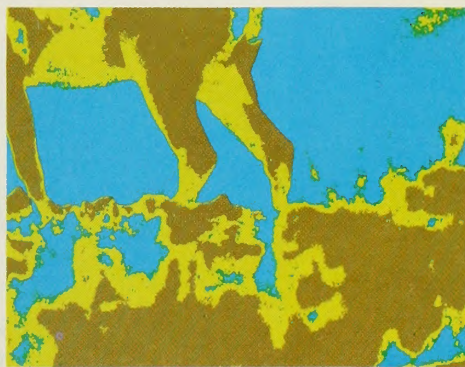
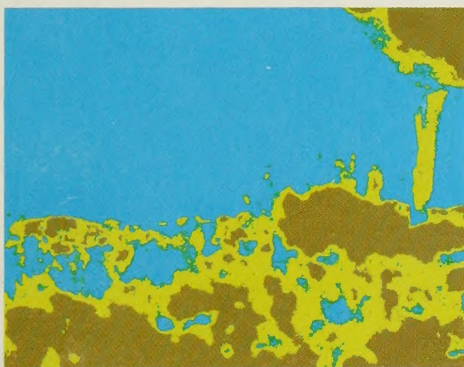
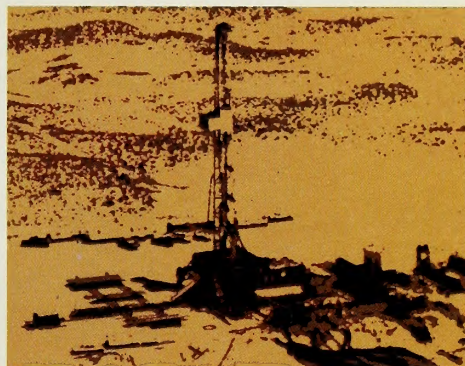
WYOMING Land Use Decisions



88001979

Eastern Powder  
River Basin Area

Casper District



HD  
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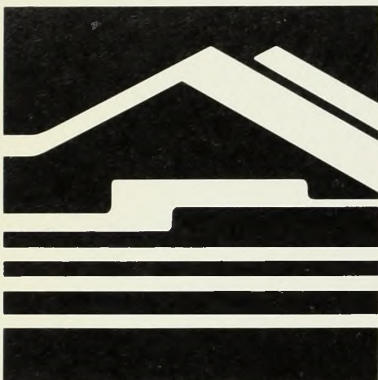


LANDS

MINERALS

FOREST  
PRODUCTS

RANGE  
MANAGEMENT



THE BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT  
DENVER SERVICE CENTER  
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at the Denver Service Center.

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FOREST  
PRODUCTS

WATERSHED

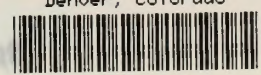
RECREATION

WILDLIFE



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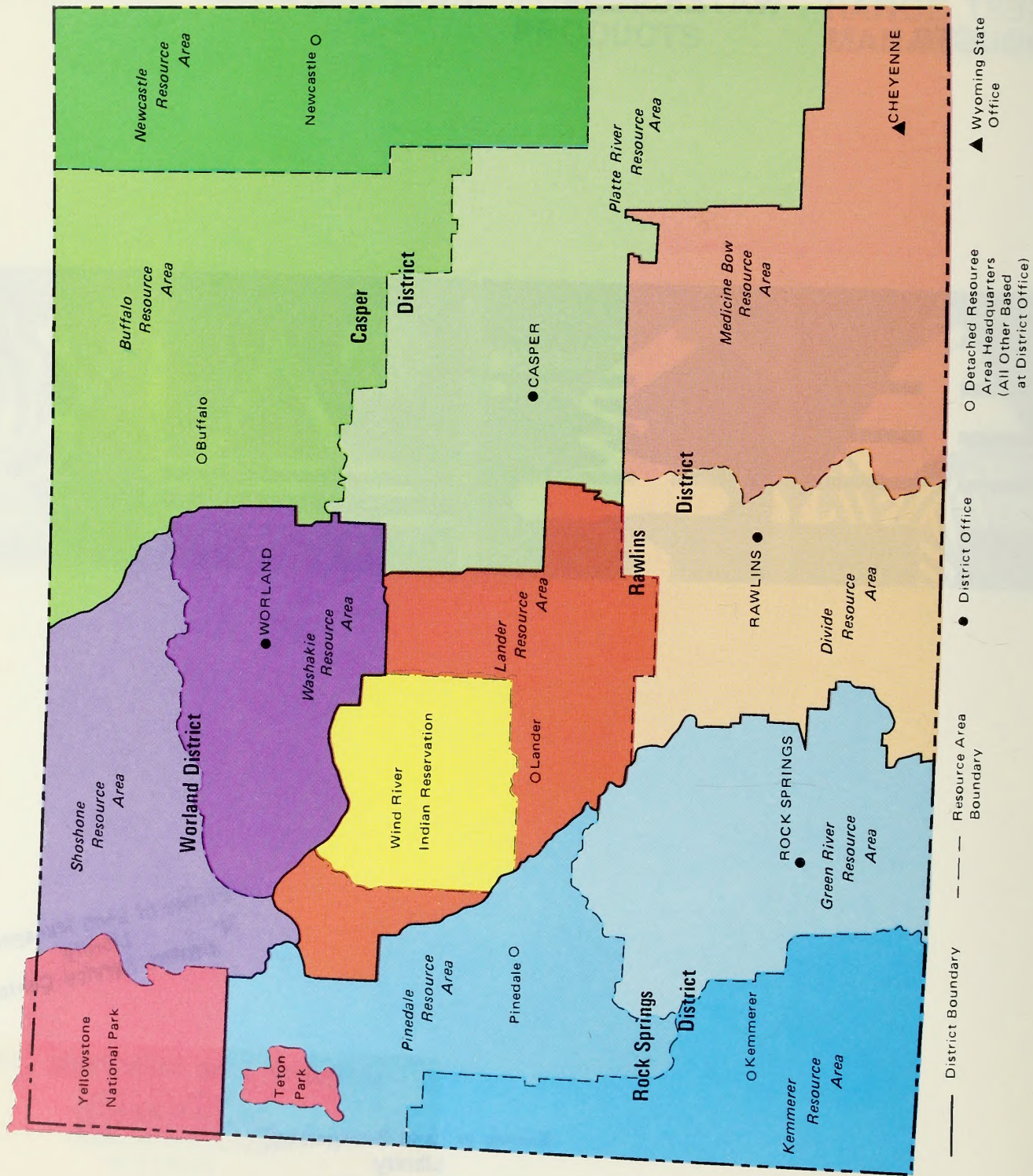


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# BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT OFFICES IN WYOMING





## PURPOSE

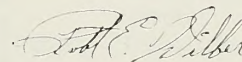
This brochure contains the most significant Management Framework Plan (MFP) decisions for the Eastern Powder River Coal Basin. The planning area includes all of Campbell County and the portion of Converse County lying north of the North Platte River.

Planning within this area represents an update of Management Framework Plans completed in 1974-75. This was necessary in order for BLM to respond to the new Department of the Interior coal leasing policy.

Numerous organizations—both public and private—and many individual citizens contributed time, data, thoughts and talent to this Management Framework Plan. The news media was especially helpful in "getting the word out," which stimulated public interest and participation.

Not everyone will be happy with our decisions and their reasons will be as varied as the interests they represent, but BLM could not have completed this plan without everyone's help.

My staff and I thank you all. If you have questions or if you would like to review specific portions of the MFP at our Buffalo or Casper Offices, please let us know.



**Robert E. Wilber**  
District Manager  
Casper District  
July 28, 1977





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## OVERVIEW

This brochure is an update of Management Framework Plans (MFPs) completed in 1974. Revision was needed to provide more detail as a basis for preparing an environmental statement on proposed coal leasing.

The Eastern Powder River Basin Planning Unit encompasses all of Campbell County and Converse County north of the North Platte River. This area was selected to correspond with the area assessed in the environmental statement completed in 1974 (FES 74-55) assessing the regional impacts of four mine plans and a railroad in the Eastern Powder River Basin. The environmental statement that will follow this MFP will assess coal development actions that were proposed after FES 74-55 was completed.

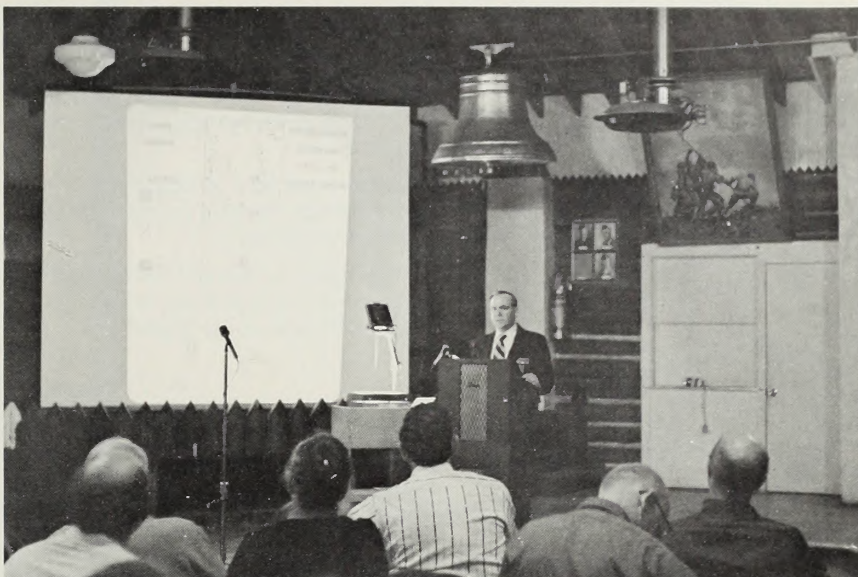
The revised plan will serve as a guide for management of the surface of the public lands as well as the federal mineral estate, much of which lies under privately owned surface.

The plan includes narrative and graphic displays of proposed land use decisions, supported by the rationale and a summary of public input for each program, including lands, minerals, range, forestry, watershed, recreation and wildlife.

The MFP is a working document. It is a guide for day-to-day activity. The planning decisions allocate resources and land uses, thereby defining and resolving use conflicts. Program objectives and land use allocations set forth in the MFP provide guidelines for developing specific activity plans for management of such programs as watershed, wildlife habitat, grazing, minerals and recreation.

With the publication of this brochure, BLM considers the MFP for this area complete to date. However, in response to changing conditions or demands, BLM will consider or initiate revisions in these decisions as necessary.

Public participation has been an integral part of the BLM planning process. This process requires that



**Explaining BLM's proposed multiple use decisions. Area Manager Forrest Littrell discusses proposed land use decisions at a public meeting in Douglas.**

interested citizens be given an opportunity to express their views and desires, raise specific issues and explore solutions in the various planning areas.

Public involvement in the Eastern Powder River Basin MFP update began in the spring of 1976 with individual contacts to gather information and recommendations concerning future land use. Future planning was discussed with special interest groups and members of the Casper District Advisory Board in the last months of 1976.

In January, the Casper District Office mailed a public information packet on land use planning for Campbell and Converse Counties to about 500 concerned citizens in Wyoming and in other areas. A feature story explaining the planning activity and focusing on coal related proposals that necessitated the update appeared in the eastern Wyoming newspapers and on radio and television. The Casper District Manager was interviewed on radio and television in Douglas, Gillette and Casper. Information packets were available at the Chambers of Commerce in Gillette and Douglas.

Five meetings were held in early 1977 to discuss planning in the area:

Date	Type	Place
1/31/77	Federal agencies	Casper
2/1/77	State and local governments	Gillette
2/1/77	Public meeting	Gillette
2/2/77	State and local governments	Douglas
2/2/77	Public meeting	Douglas

A total of 285 people attended the meetings. Forty-seven individuals made oral comments. Fifty-four people submitted written comments to BLM by the March 1, 1977, deadline. On March 25, 1977, BLM mailed out 750 copies of a booklet containing summaries of the written and oral comments.

After analyzing the comments, BLM drafted the proposed decisions. On April 26 and 27, BLM held public meetings/hearings to explain the proposed decisions and obtain formal testimony. The record was held open until May 6 and 27 people submitted written testimony. This brochure contains the final decisions.

**Robert E. Wilber**  
District Manager



# GENERAL DESCRIPTION

(See General Location map, page 5.)

The Eastern Powder River Basin planning area encompasses all of Campbell County and that part of Converse County north of the North Platte River. The planning area contains 3.7 million acres, nearly 304,000 acres (8.4 percent) of which are public lands administered by BLM. The surface is about 75 percent privately owned, but the federal government administers most of the mineral estate. Thunder Basin National Grasslands, the surface of which is administered by the Forest Service, is included in the planning unit. Federal minerals within Thunder Basin National Grasslands are administered by BLM.

Topography of the planning area typifies the Great Plains region, with gently rolling hills and an overall flat aspect. Slopes are gentle for the most part, with some rims and uplifts in eastern and northern Campbell County. A rugged area, the Powder River Breaks, lie in northwestern Campbell County.

Other major land features include: Fortification Creek, Pumpkin Buttes, Rochelle Hills, Pine Ridge, Walker Creek Ridge and the Powder, Belle Fourche and North Platte Rivers.

Vegetation is predominantly plains species of grasses and forbs. Some of the areas have sagebrush, greasewood and other types of brush. Drainage bottoms generally feature cottonwoods and other deciduous trees. Major uplifts in the area support ponderosa pine and juniper stands.

Large populations of wildlife use the area. One of the largest herds of pronghorn antelope in the world ranges over most of it. Other important big game species include mule and whitetail deer and elk. Upland game birds in the planning unit include sage and sharptail grouse, pheasant, chukars and doves. Predators, most commonly coyotes and bobcats, inhabit the area.

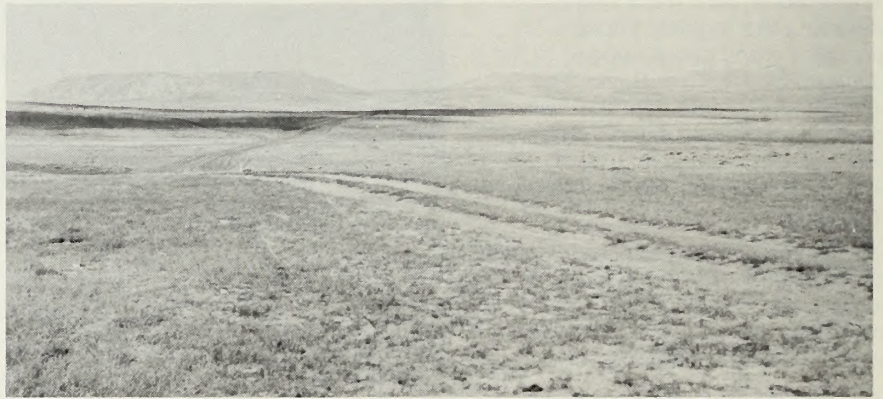
The average population density in the unit is 5.4 people per square mile. This exceeds the state average of four people per square mile. Gillette is the largest community in the planning unit.

The local economy is heavily dependent on mineral production and livestock ranching.

An estimated 12 percent of all coal reserves in the world are in the Eastern Powder River Basin.

Estimates vary, but it is generally agreed there is enough coal to meet the nation's energy needs (at present levels of consumption) for 300-400 years. Environmental and socio-economic impacts resulting from coal production in the area appear to be minimal compared to other regions.

Other important sectors of the economy are agriculture, recreation and transportation.



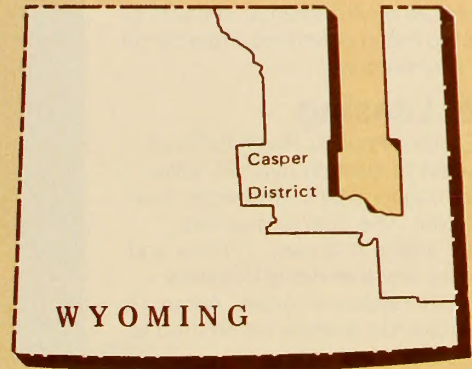
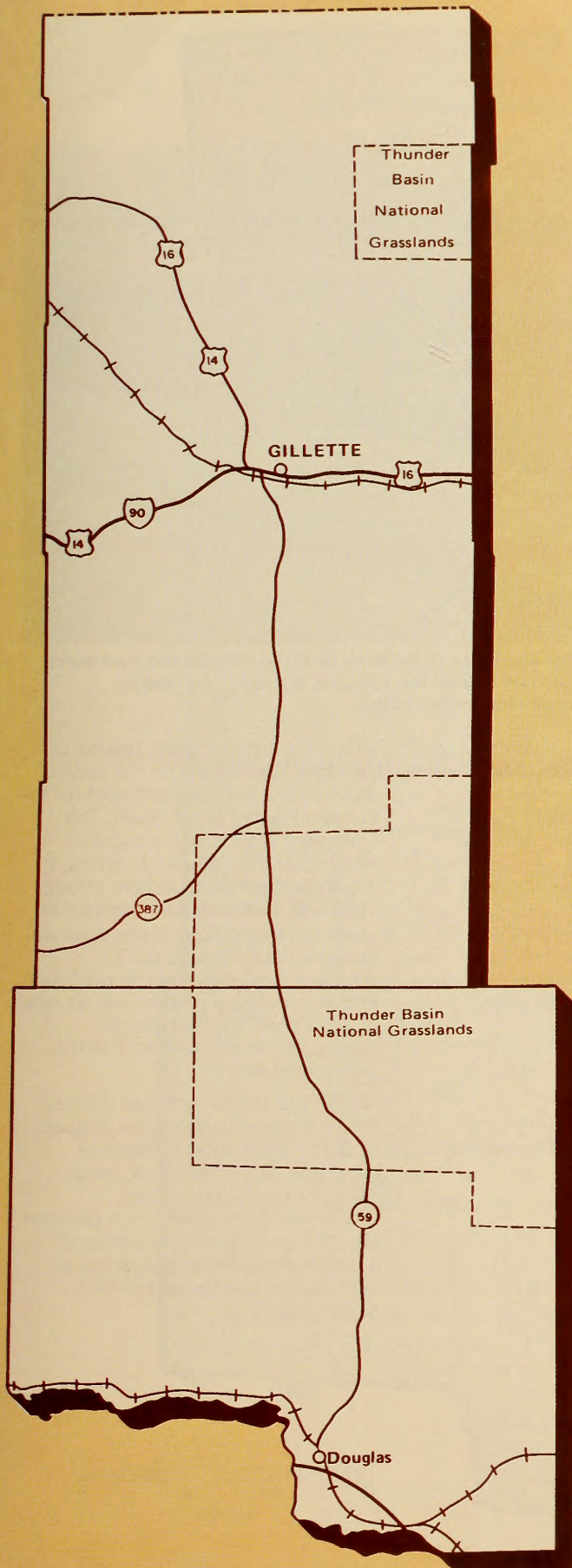
**Typical terrain in the Powder River Basin. Most of the land in the Powder River Basin is generally flat. This scene contains a section of the historic Bozeman Trail in the foreground and Pumpkin Buttes, the highest feature in the planning unit, in the background.**



**Downtown Gillette. Gillette is the largest city in the planning unit and is expecting more growth due to coal development in coal rich Campbell County.**



## GENERAL LOCATION





# MAJOR ISSUES AND PROBLEMS

(See Land Status map, page 7.)

This section summarizes the issues and proposed decisions which have the greatest public significance or which have generated the most controversy. The issues are usually conflicts between resource uses, irreversible environmental impacts or expected socio-economic impacts on local communities.

## Coal Leasing

The Eastern Powder River Basin is estimated to contain over 30 billion tons of economically strippable, low-sulfur coal. The coal is near the surface where it is easy to mine and there are few overriding conflicts with other resource values. About 15 billion tons are already committed to development.

The amount of coal leased is in direct proportion to the socio-economic impact to be expected from a large influx of people to work the mines and to service mine workers and their families.

During BLM's early February public meetings, people generally expressed concern about growth related impact on the communities, the water and present transportation systems. In response to such concern, BLM is suggesting a conservative approach to additional coal leasing, to allow the communities sufficient time to prepare for social and economic impacts.

If the areas to be analyzed for possible leasing through 1983 were actually leased, this approach would:

1. Disperse socio-economic impacts by channeling some of the development toward the new community of Wright, in the center of the planning area, and to that extent, reduce such impacts on Gillette and Douglas.



**Strip mining on the thick and close to the surface Wyodak-Anderson coal seam helps meet energy needs and bolster the economy but also can lead to socio-economic strains on local communities.**

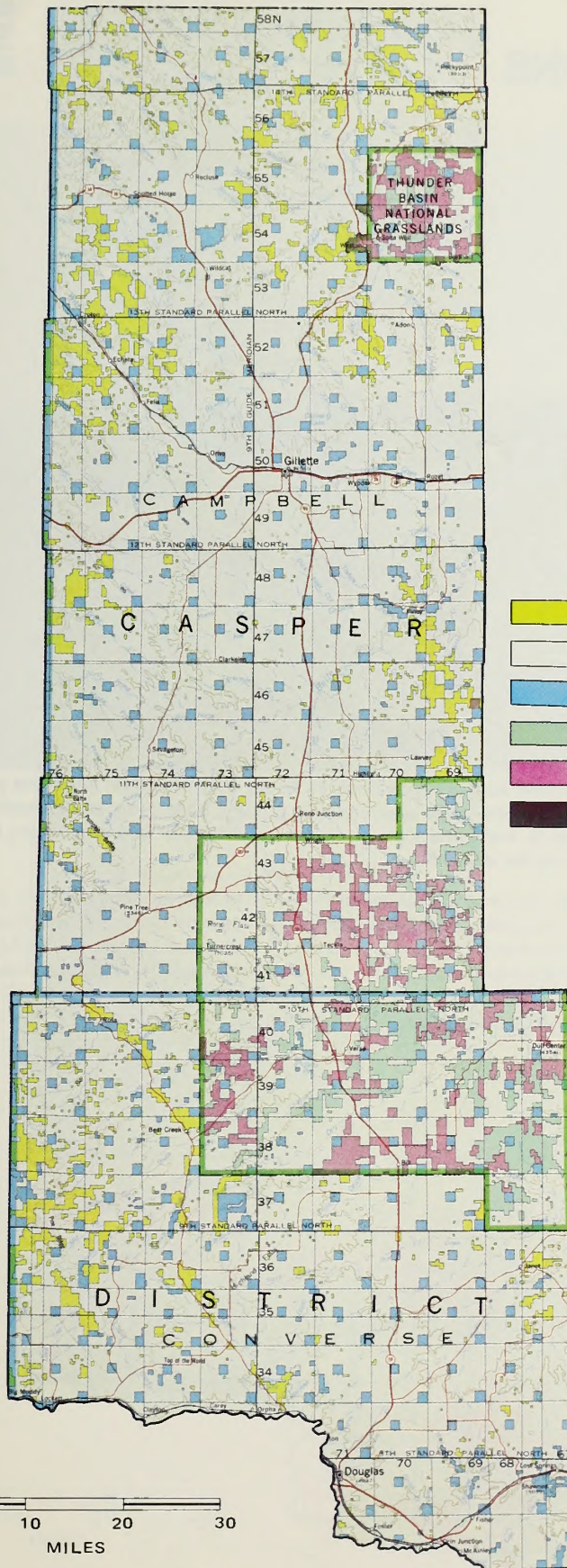
2. Make a significant amount of high quality coal available, enabling the region to meet current coal development demands without undue strain on the people of eastern Wyoming.
3. Minimize impact on deer and antelope.
4. Confine new development to an area with high potential for successful reclamation.
5. Minimize conflict with other resource values.

Final planning decisions related to new coal leasing will be the subject of an environmental statement for the Eastern Powder River Basin. The statement will include a regional analysis of the cumulative effect of expanded coal development through 1990 and a site specific analysis of areas pertaining to coal development through 1983. When a draft environmental statement is published and distributed, a hearing will be held to allow the public additional opportunity to provide input to the final statement.

NOTE: The following pages discuss the final planning decisions in each of BLM's seven major resource programs: lands, minerals, range, forest products, watershed, recreation and wildlife. Each decision has its own degree of significance, but only the decision pertaining to coal leasing can be said to be a major issue.



# LAND STATUS



- Public Lands
- Private Lands
- State Lands
- National Grasslands
- Bankhead Jones L.U. Lands
- B.L.M. Acquired Lands

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# LANDS

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



### Program Description

The lands program supports other BLM resource management programs, as well as those of local, state and other federal agencies. Lands with unusual values can be designated for specific programs. Examples would be the withdrawal of lands for recreation development or preservation of wilderness, cultural or historic values.

BLM provides land for community expansion and other public purposes. This can include private development where such ownership will best serve the public interest.

Lands program activities include such actions as: planning, classification, appraisal, exchanges, sales, record maintenance, administration of leases, rights-of-way and land use permits.

### Resource Description

The planning unit contains about 3 million acres in Campbell County and 640,000 acres in Converse County.

(Note: Public lands referred to in the following paragraphs applies to those administered by BLM.)

In Campbell County 7.5 percent of the surface is under BLM administration, 7.2 percent is state, 5 percent national grasslands and 80 percent private. The major concentrations of public lands are along the Powder River. The remainder is widely dispersed, with concentrations never exceeding 25 percent in a township. Most townships outside the concentration areas contain less than 5 percent public lands.

Of the 640,000 acres of Converse County in the planning unit, about 12.8 percent is public land, 11.7 percent is state, 75.3 percent is private and one percent is county owned. The largest concentration of public land is in Pine Ridge, in northwest Converse County. The public land is in a fragmented pattern across the county with no more than two townships containing 50 percent; most townships contain less than five percent.



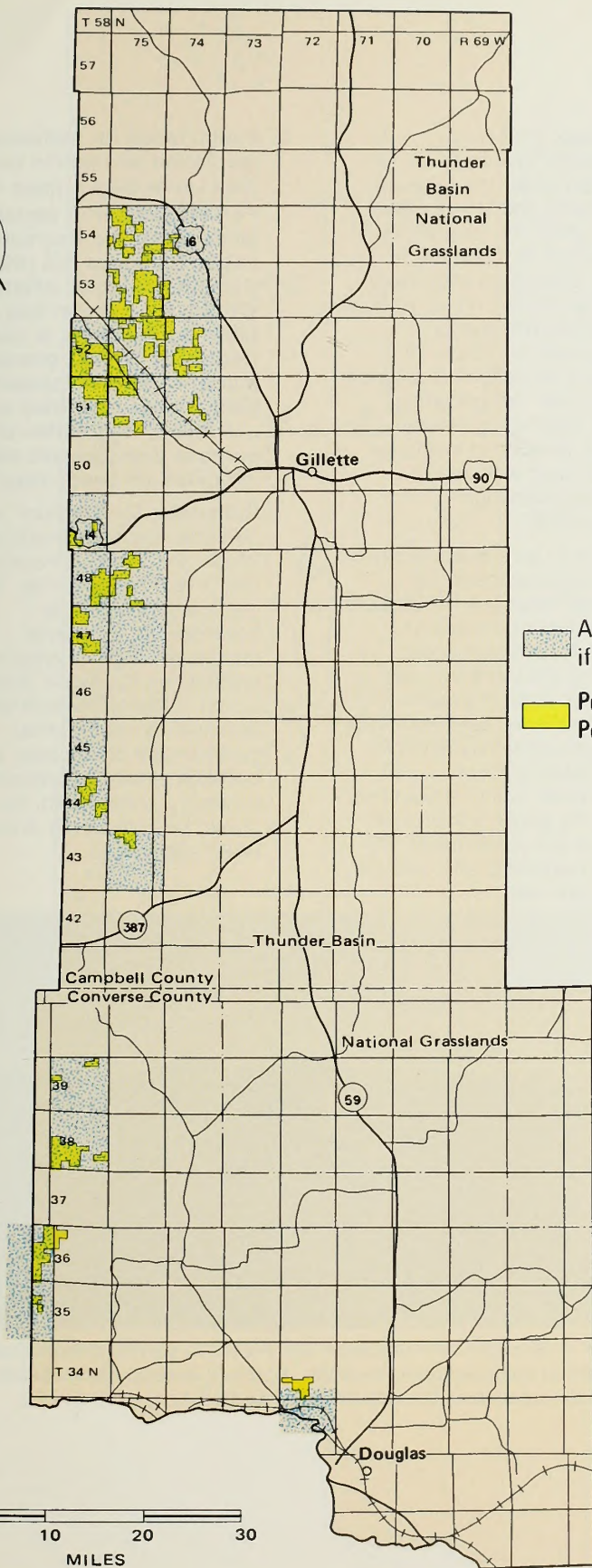
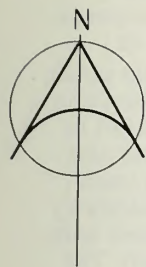
**Energy related support lines such as heavy duty electrical lines and pipelines can adversely affect the area's scenic quality. BLM proposes to work with other federal, state and local agencies to determine where corridors for such lines should be located.**

There are minimal demands for disposal of public lands. Several areas have been identified as having potential for transferring land for recreation and public purposes. BLM has several requests for these areas.

Industrial development, primarily of energy minerals, will create demand on public lands for parks and rights-of-way for pipelines, powerlines and roads.



# LANDS MAP 1



- Areas Where B.L.M. Would Like to Acquire Land if Approached for an Exchange
- Public Lands Within Potential Acquisition Areas



## Multiple Use Objective

Identify and manage public lands for a quality environment and support of public purposes associated with community expansion, energy development and other multiple uses.

## Multiple Use Decisions

1. **Lands transfer priorities.**  
(See Lands maps 1 and 2, pages 9 and 11.)

**BLM will investigate the value of making land ownership adjustments on public lands identified on Lands map 2 in the following priority order:**

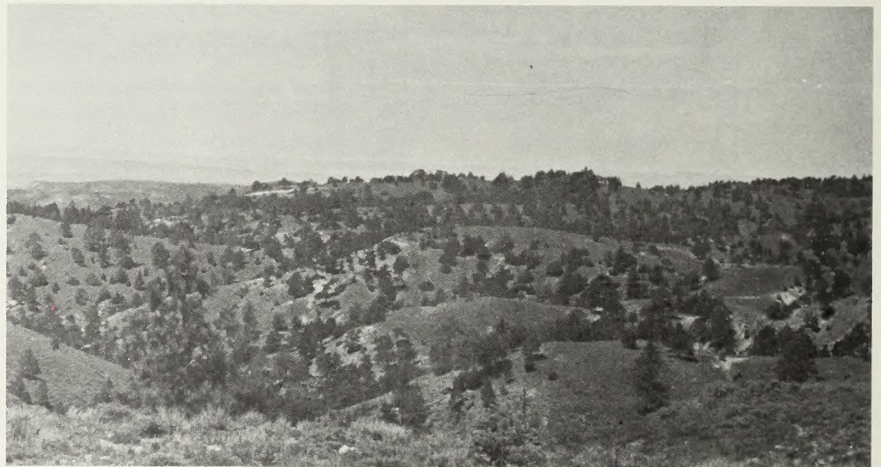
- a. **Recreation and public purposes uses.**
- b. **Exchange (preferably for certain lands indicated on Lands map 1).**
- c. **Bureau initiated public sale.** It should be noted that BLM will only enter into an exchange when another party expresses interest in such an exchange. If exchange opportunities are not available, then BLM would consider recreation and public purposes applications for the public lands indicated on Lands map 2. Finally, if neither of the above opportunities exists, then BLM would consider public sale of some of the public lands on Lands map 2. BLM will not entertain *private initiated* requests for purchase of public lands. Exchanges will be guided by the philosophy that BLM must acquire land of greater public use value than that exchanged. Areas where BLM would like to acquire land through exchange are indicated on Lands map 1.

**Rationale:** Exchange procedures have been simplified under the Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976. The fragmented land pattern in much of the Casper District creates many exchange opportunities. Actions associated with energy development in the planning unit, such as assembling logical mining units, consolidating leases, eliminating problems in existing leases and laying out rights-of-way, will create additional exchange opportunities.

There must be a wide variety of public lands available for exchange whenever a company or individual expresses an interest in land exchanges. Retaining the lands in public ownership does not cause any major problems. New legislative provisions allow payments in lieu of taxes to local governments which should help satisfy the public's expressed desire to put public lands into private ownership and onto the county tax rolls.

2. **Public lands for community recreation and public purposes.** (See Lands map 3, page 13.)  
**Pursue transfer of certain public lands under the Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP) to Campbell County, Gillette and Wright. If no action has been taken by the cities or county by December 1, 1980, proceed with multiple use development. The public lands identified as suitable for recreation or public purpose development are indicated on Lands map 3.**

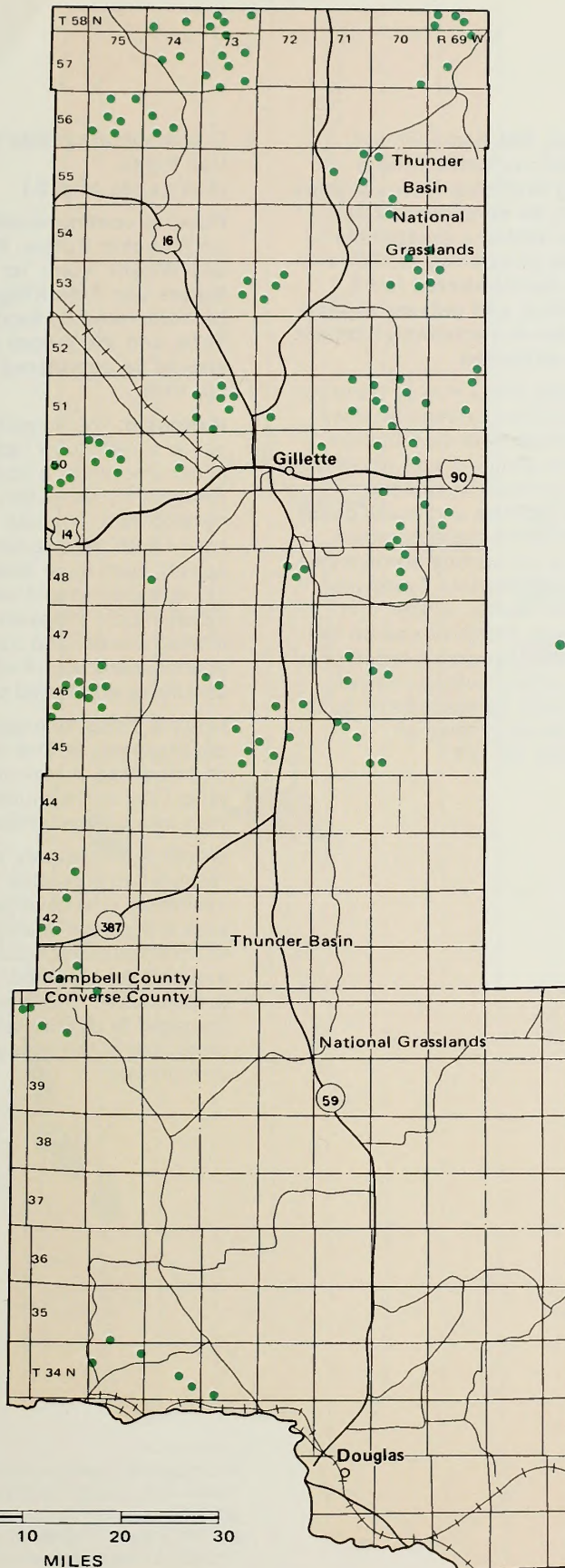
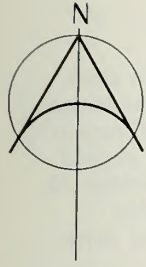
**Rationale:** This decision notifies Campbell County, Gillette and Wright that lands are available for their use if they act now. It will encourage these local governments to analyze opportunities for developing public facilities on the public lands. If no action is taken, the land will be available for recreational development or disposal. Until the question of public purpose suitability is answered, the lands should be considered available for R&PP application.



Pine Ridge — Site for Communication Site Plans. To prevent unorganized development of communication facilities, BLM will develop communication site plans for this scenic area in western Converse County.



## LANDS MAP 2



● Public Land for Potential Land Transfer



### 3. Use of Mined Coal Pits for Sanitary Landfills.

Contact the coal mining companies and city and county governments about the possibility of using mine pits for sanitary landfills. BLM will also notify the appropriate mining companies of any local government interest in public lands within their coal leases. If a mining operation interferes with valuable public purpose uses of the land, the coal company shall be required to furnish an alternate site for the public use. Rehabilitation of the mined area will restore the site so it is suitable for the original or higher use.

**Rationale:** As population growth continues, public use areas such as sanitary landfills, parks and public recreation areas must be considered in order to protect the quality of life in Campbell County. A dialogue between BLM, the coal companies and local governments can prevent disruption of public services. BLM has encouraged local governments to identify areas suitable for public use.

### 4. Energy Transmission and Transportation Corridors.

New energy transmission or transportation facilities which cross one or more boundaries of the planning area must consider location within a compatible distance<sup>1</sup> of existing facilities. This policy will apply to facilities that meet any of the following criteria:

**Power Lines:** Any line with an "H" type structure or larger.

**Pipe Lines:** Any line six inches in diameter or larger, regardless of volume.

**Highways:** Major collector highways.

**Railroads:** All main railroad lines leading out of the planning area.

In effect, this decision will establish corridors around existing facilities. New corridors will only be considered when location within a compatible distance of existing facilities can be demonstrated to be impractical and unfeasible, and where the environmental impact can be mitigated.

**Rationale:** Major energy transmission and transportation facilities have already been constructed within the planning area. By establishing corridors around the existing facilities and locating new facilities within these corridors, problems concerning adverse environmental impacts, landowner concerns, design, survey, and right-of-way problems can be mitigated. This decision is based on a corridor study involving 34 individuals from 24 agencies or firms which was completed on September 30, 1977.

### 5. Communication Site and Land Use Plans. (See Lands map 3.)

Plan for communication sites on Pumpkin Buttes, Pine Ridge and Wright. Plans for Pumpkin Buttes and Pine Ridge should be completed by September 30, 1978; and the Wright plan should be completed by June 30, 1979.

**Rationale:** The Pumpkin Buttes site is excellent for radio communications. It also has potential for recreation development. To make the best use of both, requirements for each activity need to be determined. The site plan should consider such visual impact mitigations as limiting number and size of antennae and use of non-reflective structures and buried powerlines.

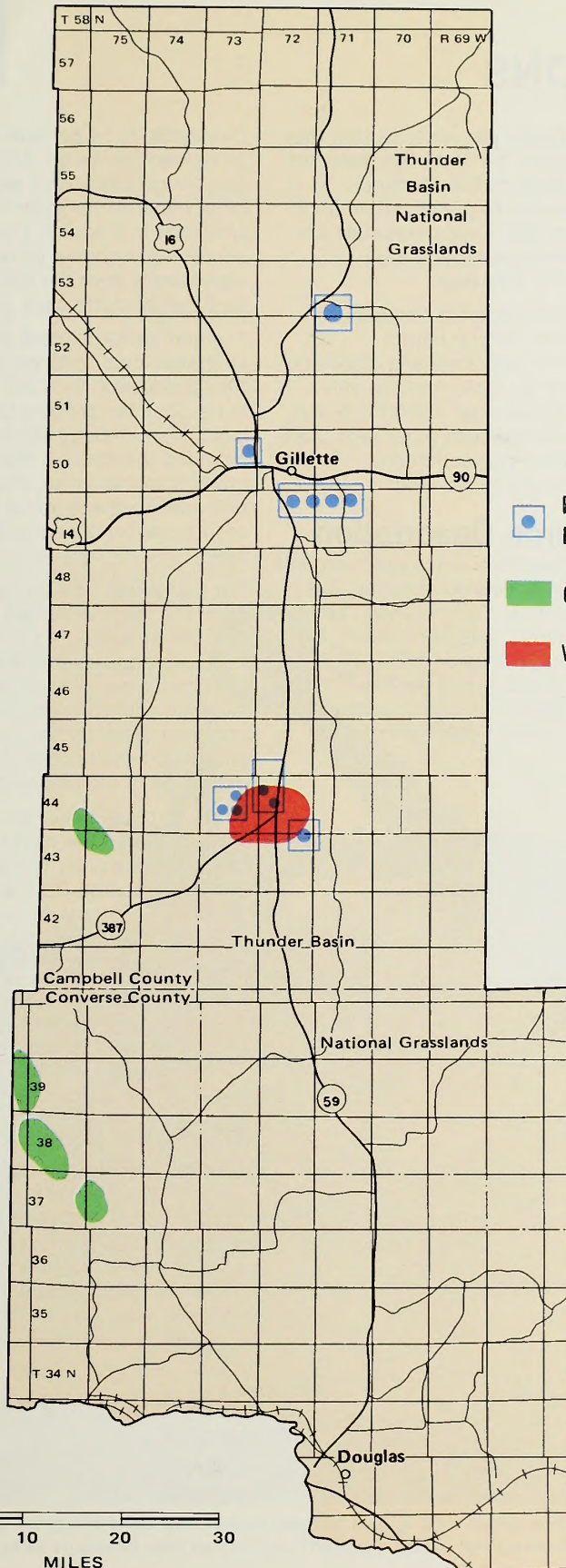
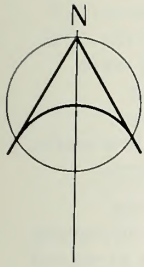
Multiple, mass, unorganized developments at Pine Ridge must be prevented. A plan should reflect the entire situation rather than taking a piecemeal approach.




Wright is a new town, built in response to population growth caused by coal development. The area is in a high quality environment. Some public land is available for recreation and public purpose uses. This land should be managed to provide land use and protection of the high quality environment.

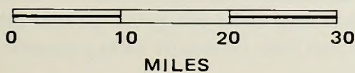
<sup>1</sup>A compatible distance will be determined on a case-by-case basis considering minimum design standards for the system considered and major impacts to the human environment.



# LANDS MAP 3



-  Public Land Suitable for Recreation and Public Purpose (R & PP) Use (Lands, Decision 2)
-  Communication Site (Lands, Decision 5)
-  Wright Land Use Plan Area (Lands, Decision 2)



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# MINERALS

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



### Program Description

BLM is responsible for administering the mineral rights beneath about 8 million acres in the ten-county district. Much of this is beneath privately owned surface.

In the historic disposal of land to private individuals and newly formed states, title to the surface and subsurface rights were often separated. In conveying title, the federal government reserved rights to the underground minerals beneath millions of acres of land which passed into private ownership.

This distinction has important implications for the management of mineral resources in the Casper District.

The minerals fall into three categories:

**Locatable:** Locatable minerals are minerals that may be "staked" and claimed under the General Mining Law of 1872. These are mainly metals such as gold, silver, lead, copper, zinc and uranium; however, some nonmetallic minerals such as bentonite, fluorspar, asbestos and mica are also in this category. Uranium is the most significant locatable mineral in the Casper District.

**Leasable:** These are minerals that may be leased under the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920. Coal, oil and gas, oil shale, phosphates, trona (sodium) sulfur and potassium are examples of leasable minerals, the most significant of which are coal and oil and gas in the Casper District.

**Salable:** These are minerals that may be sold under the Materials Sale Act of 1947. They include common varieties of sand, gravel, stone and clinker (scoria). These materials are in demand for energy-related construction activities.

The minerals program includes adjudicating mineral patent applications, appraisal and disposing of minerals by lease, license and permit; coordinating exploration and mining activities with other land uses; and providing protection and reclamation of mined land.

### Resource Description

Mineral resources in the planning unit are the major source of public and private income. This revenue comes from the direct sale of minerals, from wages and salaries paid to employees and from taxes and royalties paid by industry to state, local and federal governments.

During 1974, 14 percent of the coal, 34 percent of the oil, 21 percent of the natural gas, and 5 percent of all other minerals in Wyoming were produced in this unit. These percentages should increase significantly over the next few years, particularly in the case of coal.

The unit contains most of the strippable coal reserves in Wyoming. Coal production by 1985 is expected to be 33 times present production, based on company estimates provided the state. If these predictions hold true, the planning unit could provide about 84 percent of the coal produced in Wyoming by 1985.

For many years oil and gas have been the most important minerals in the unit. However, as oil and gas reserves are depleted and it becomes more difficult (and expensive) to discover new reserves, coal and, possibly, uranium production will become the dominant industries in the planning unit.

Uranium could become an important industry within the next five years. There are plans for processing plants near Kaycee and Douglas. The planning unit contains large reserves of uranium and exploration is continuing at a rapid rate.

Development of energy minerals will create great demand for sand, gravel, scoria and crushed stone. These minerals will be needed for roads, housing and other structures.

### Multiple Use Objective

Manage mineral resources for efficient development, giving priority consideration to energy minerals but, at the same time, providing environmental protection and mitigation of socio-economic impacts.





Strip mining using the truck and shovel method at Sun Oil's Cordero Mine, south of Gillette. The electric shovel is loading overburden prior to actual coal extraction. The huge trucks are capable of hauling up to 170 tons at a time.



## Multiple Use Decisions

### 1. Potential Coal Lease Areas. (See Minerals map 1.)

Subject to the findings of a regional coal environmental statement, BLM will propose a coal leasing schedule through 1983 for 26,500 acres of federal coal reserves containing about 3 billion tons of coal.

The coal to be analyzed for potential leasing falls into two categories:

- a. Uncommitted economic coal that BLM has identified for potential new leasing.
- b. Economic coal reserves tied closely to existing operations or mining plan proposals subject to BLM decisions within the next five years.

Category 1 contains approximately 19,200 acres and 2.2 billion tons of identified economic coal reserves. These areas are located in southeastern Campbell County and a small portion of northeastern Converse County. (See Minerals map 1.) The legal description of the areas in category 1 are as follows:

- T. 41 N., R. 69 W.,  
part of: sec. 18.
- T. 41 N., R. 70 W.,  
part of: secs. 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 7,  
8, 9, 10, 11, 17, 18, 21, 27, 28,  
29, 30, 33, 34.
- T. 41 N., R. 70 W.,  
all of: secs. 6, 19.
- T. 42 N., R. 69 W.,  
part of: sec. 19.
- T. 42 N., R. 70 W.,  
part of: secs. 8, 9, 13, 27, 28.
- T. 43 N., R. 70 W.,  
part of: secs. 4, 5, 7, 8, 18,  
30, 32, 33.
- T. 43 N., R. 70 W.,  
all of: secs. 9, 19, 29, 31.
- T. 44 N., R. 70 W.,  
part of: secs. 3, 4, 5, 8, 9, 10,  
17, 21, 22, 26, 27, 33, 34, 35.
- T. 45 N., R. 70 W.,  
part of: secs. 18, 21, 22, 27,  
29, 33, 34.

Category 2 contains approximately 7,300 acres with an estimated 800 million tons of coal. These areas (see Minerals map 1) range from northcentral Campbell County south to the Campbell-Converse County line. These areas will be analyzed for leasing through 1983 because they are either associated with coal reserves included in existing operations or were previously committed to development and involved in mining proposals subject to decisions under the Department's short term criteria leasing policy. The legal description of the areas in category 2 are as follows:

- T. 40 N., R. 71 W.,  
sec. 2, NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , E  $\frac{1}{2}$  W  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  
SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , N  $\frac{1}{2}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 41 N., R. 70 W.,  
sec. 20, E  $\frac{1}{2}$ , E  $\frac{1}{2}$  W  $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
sec. 21, N  $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , W  $\frac{1}{2}$ , N  $\frac{1}{2}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 28, W  $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , W  $\frac{1}{2}$ ,  
S  $\frac{1}{2}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 29, N  $\frac{1}{2}$ , NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
N  $\frac{1}{2}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 41 N., R. 71 W.,  
sec. 27, S  $\frac{1}{2}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 28, SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 34, SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 35, W  $\frac{1}{2}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 47 N., R. 71 W.,  
sec. 5, NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
S  $\frac{1}{2}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 6, all.
- T. 47 N., R. 72 W.,  
sec. 1, E  $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 48 N., R. 71 W.,  
sec. 29, W  $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
sec. 30, all;  
sec. 31, N  $\frac{1}{2}$ , S  $\frac{1}{2}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 51 N., R. 72 W.,  
sec. 1, NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
S  $\frac{1}{2}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 2, NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , N  $\frac{1}{2}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 3, N  $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 12, N  $\frac{1}{2}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SW  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

- T. 52 N., R. 72 W.,  
sec. 27, E  $\frac{1}{2}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 29, S  $\frac{1}{2}$  S  $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
sec. 32, N  $\frac{1}{2}$ ;  
sec. 34, SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
E  $\frac{1}{2}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ;  
sec. 35, E  $\frac{1}{2}$ , E  $\frac{1}{2}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 52 N., R. 73 W.,  
sec. 3, W  $\frac{1}{2}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
SE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NW  $\frac{1}{4}$ , NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  SW  $\frac{1}{4}$ ,  
NW  $\frac{1}{4}$  SE  $\frac{1}{4}$ .
- T. 54 N., R. 72 W.,  
sec. 2, NE  $\frac{1}{4}$  NE  $\frac{1}{4}$ .

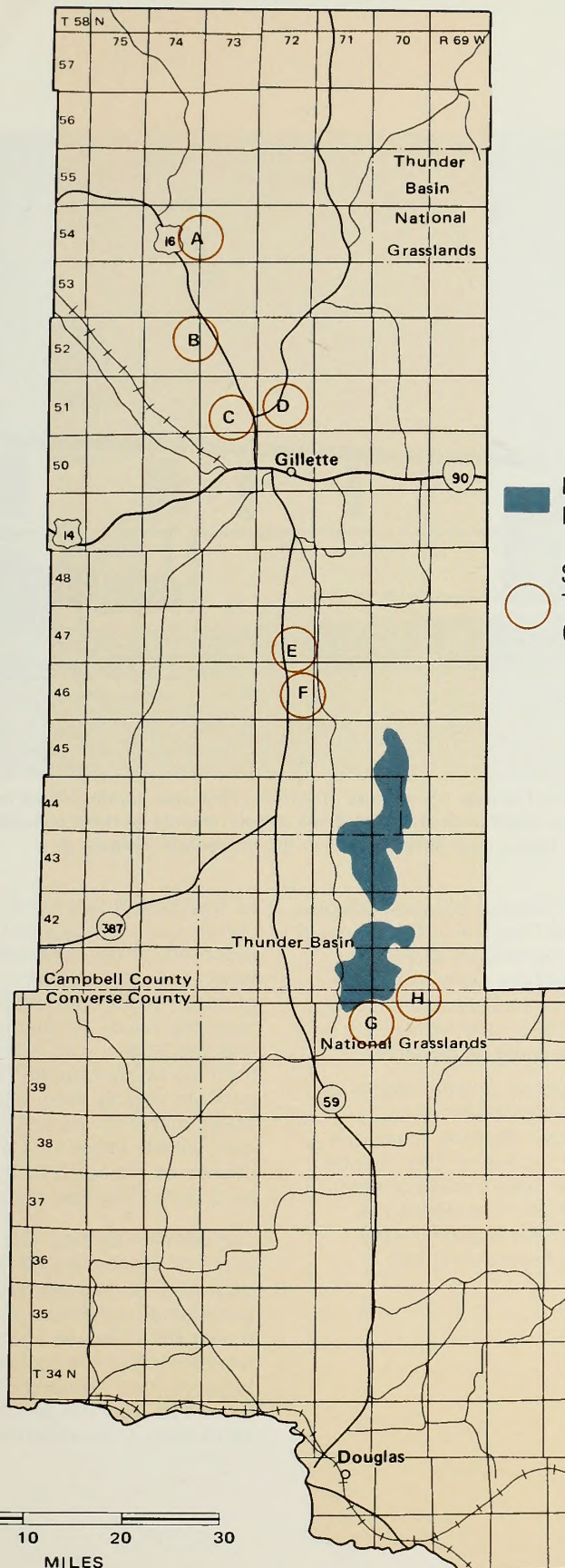
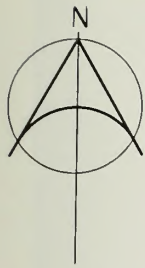
This decision will be the proposed action to be analyzed in the environmental statement (ES) for the Eastern Powder River Basin. The ES will assess the site-specific effects of coal development proposals requiring BLM action through 1983 and the cumulative effects of coal development on the region up to 1990. The ES should be completed in 1978.

**Rationale:** An estimated 15 billion tons of federal coal have been committed to development within the planning unit. Specifically, in identified economic reserves, there are: 33 leases embracing 78,000 acres and about 8.7 billion tons of coal; 10 preference right lease applications for 20,000 acres and about 2.2 billion tons of coal; and seven prospecting permit applications for 21,000 acres and about 2.3 billion tons of coal.

In addition, there are 11 leases, 37 preference right applications and 12 prospecting permit extension applications outside identified economic reserves, but within the planning unit and covering another 123,000 acres. Development potential and tonnages are uncertain, but some will be developed due to individually favorable economic factors. There are large quantities of federal coal committed to development outside this planning unit, but within the Casper District.



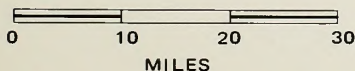
# MINERALS MAP 1



■ Potential Coal Leasing Through 1983 (2.2 Billion Tons of Federal Coal Under 19,200 Acres)

○ Site Specific Plans to be Analyzed for Decision Through 1983 (800 Million Tons of Federal Coal Under 7,300 Acres)

- A. Gulf's Norfolk Mine
- B. Gulf's Wildcat Mine
- C. Shell's Buckskin Mine
- D. Elmore Mine
- E. Amax Extension of Belle Ayr Mine
- F. Amax Extension of Belle Ayr Mine
- G. Northern Energy Resources Company's (PP & L) Mine
- H. Peabody's North Antelope Mine



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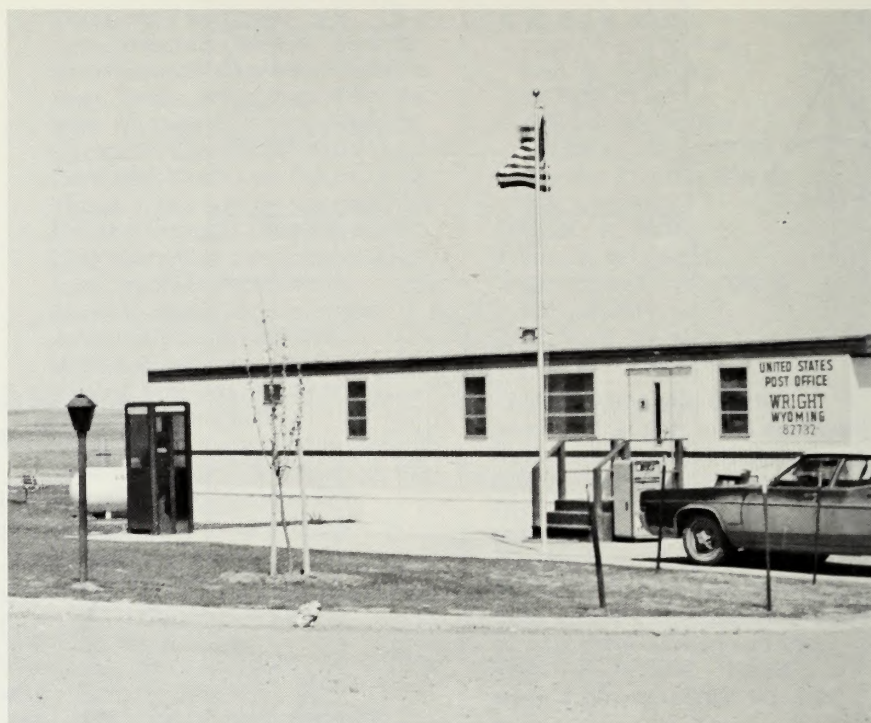


Currently leased coal in the unit could probably support 19 mines, which could produce about 190 million tons a year by 1985. It is estimated that all of the "committed coal," i.e., current leases, preference rights plus prospecting permit extension applications, could support as many as 46 mines. (An average mine is assumed to include a coal reserve of 350 million tons being mined over a 40 year period involving a total of 3,500 surface acres.)

Socio-economic impact and uncertainty about water and transportation caution against a large scale increase in federal coal leasing in the immediate future. This is supported by public comment, Planning Area Analysis, other sections of the MFP and other studies and reports. However, some of the existing leases and preference rights may not be logical mining units from either the environmental or economic standpoint. Also, new environmental standards may prove too costly to produce coal on some tracts. Offering additional high quality coal for lease in areas with few environmental and resource conflicts would help to alleviate such problems.

Socio-economic impacts are a major concern in both this area and adjacent planning areas. Some local government planners and many citizens have recommended a "go slow" approach to new coal leasing to allow communities time to better accommodate the social and economic effects of coal development. The Wyoming Department of Agriculture has recommended no additional coal leasing through 1983.

On the other hand, several interests have recommended unlimited leasing. The planning decision attempts to strike a balance between the various recommendations. Areas identified for coal leasing through 1983 were selected with social and economic impacts foremost in mind. The areas



**Post office at the new community of Wright. This new community is being developed to accommodate up to 6,000 people, mainly workers associated with anticipated future coal development in the immediate vicinity.**

are roughly halfway between Douglas and Gillette. They are in the vicinity of the new community of Wright, which developers claim should be able to accommodate about 6,000 people by 1985—the earliest the new coal leases could be developed.

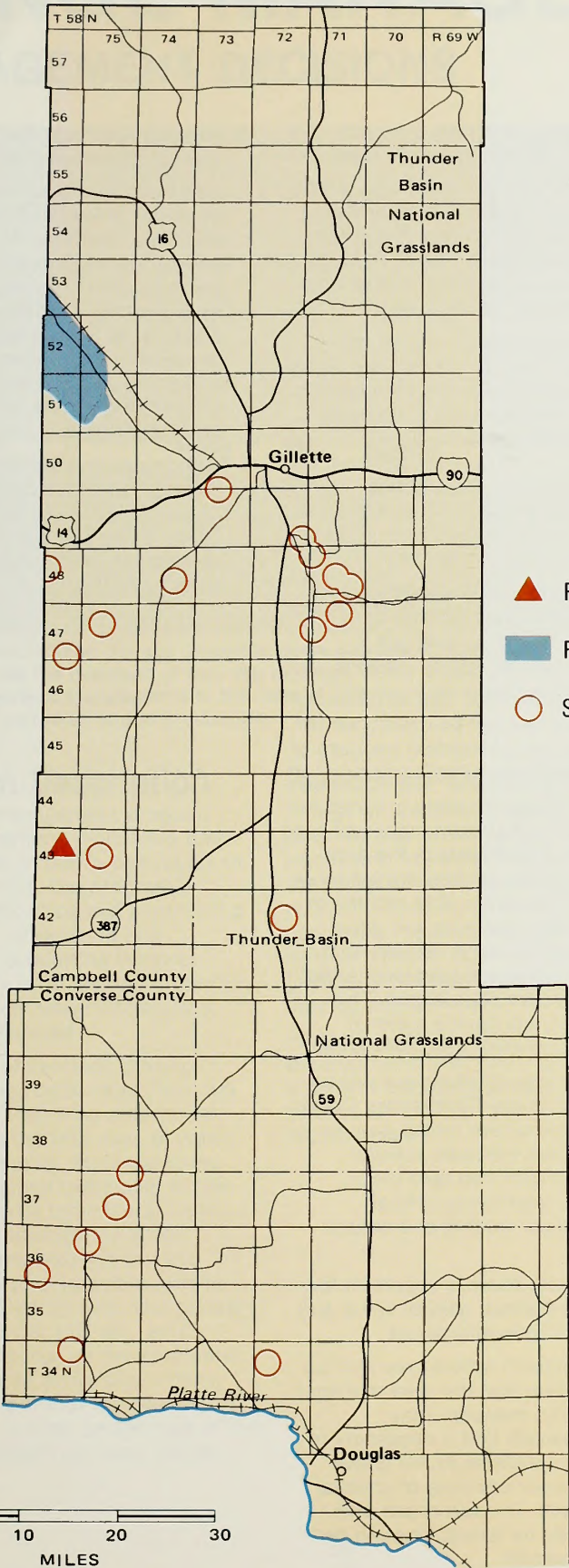
The area around Gillette, identified for no coal development, would remain closed. Surface values for community expansion, open space and a buffer zone exceed present mineral values, considering the extent of known economic coal reserves in the planning unit.

All tracts identified in the planning decision lie in or adjacent to areas proposed for development or in which interest has been expressed. Major conflicts with other resource values — such as the oil and gas fields — were eliminated from the tracts identified for possible leasing. Also, much of the area suitable for leasing has the least wildlife impact in Campbell County, as indicated by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.

The decision deletes 128,000 acres of economic coal reserves, proposed for development because of significant resource management values and potential environmental and socio-economic impacts. Also, demand or need for more coal than the decision represents has not been demonstrated.



# MINERALS MAP 2



- ▲ Ruby Archeological Site
- Fortification Creek
- Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds



## **2. Potential Special Management Areas.**

(See Minerals map 2.)

Most of the planning unit will remain open to exploration and claim staking for "locatable minerals." However, BLM will apply for protective withdrawal from mineral entry in the Fortification Creek area and Ruby archeological site.

In addition, there are a few historic sites along the Bozeman Trail that have been submitted for inclusion on the National Register of Historic Sites. If accepted, applications will also be submitted to the Secretary of the Interior to have them withdrawn from mineral entry.

**Rationale:** The Fortification Creek area has been set aside as a special management area to protect fragile watershed, aesthetic values and wildlife habitat. Mineral exploration or extraction should only be allowed where such values can be protected. The other sites represent important archeological and historic values.

## **3. Oil and Gas Exploration Restrictions.**

The entire planning unit will remain open to oil and gas leasing and exploration subject to the following restrictions except where waived by the area manager or district manager.

- a. No surface disturbance on slopes greater than 25 percent until BLM personnel have inspected and specified stipulations for the protection of the watershed.
- b. No occupancy or other surface disturbance within 200 feet of state and federal highways and county roads.
- c. No occupancy or other surface disturbance within 500 feet of perennial streams.
- d. No occupancy or other surface disturbance within 250 yards of known sage

grouse strutting grounds from March through June.

In addition, the following areas will receive special attention: Fortification Creek, Bozeman Trail and North Platte River (no surface occupancy within one-fourth mile of the river).

**Rationale:** Areas with slopes greater than 25 percent are highly susceptible to erosion because of slope, shallow soils and sparse vegetation. In many areas, bedrock may be exposed from 50 to 90 percent. The cost of protective measures should be a deterrent to activities on slopes greater than 25 percent.

Areas within 200 feet of county and state roads will not be developed for oil and gas production for safety reasons.

Areas within 500 feet of perennial streams will not be developed for oil and gas production because of the hazard of oil spill pollution.

Sage grouse strutting grounds are crucial to the maintenance of sage grouse populations in the area. These areas seldom involve more than three acres. The months of April, May and June are when sage grouse strut. Activity that disrupts this will adversely affect sage grouse populations. This decision will have a minimal impact on minerals development.

Oil and gas development will be allowed in the Fortification Creek area only where on-the-ground inspection indicates mineral development can take place without destroying critical watershed, wildlife and natural values.

The Platte River is important for wildlife habitat, natural value and outdoor recreational use.

The decision reflects recognition of the fact that the area manager or district manager may occasionally find it necessary to grant exceptions to the above restrictions because of unusual situations. In such cases, the rationale for exceptions will be documented.

## **4. Salable Minerals for Housing & Energy Development.**

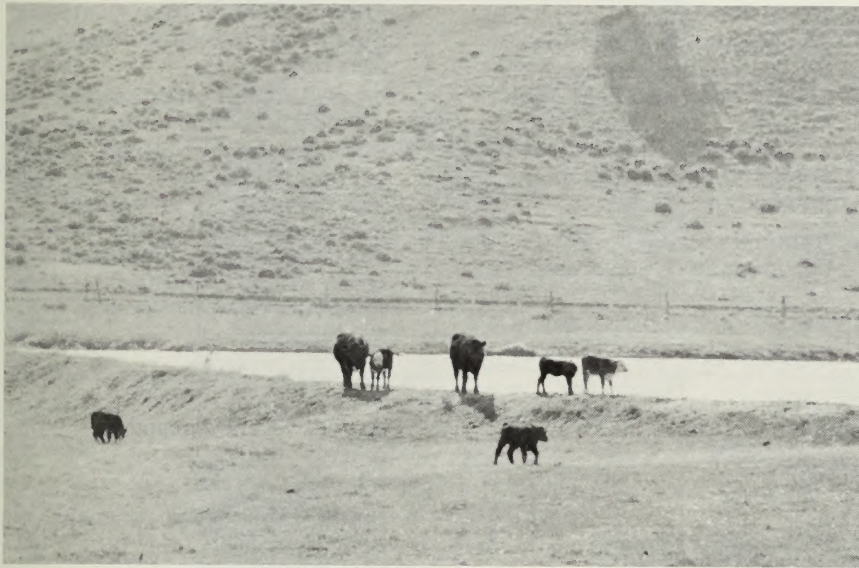
Salable mineral materials, such as sand, gravel and scoria will be made available to help meet energy development, public purpose and housing needs. In its selection of material sale sites, BLM will consider the availability of private sources of mineral materials and the recommendations of local and state agencies.

**Rationale:** Salable mineral materials will be in great demand as energy development increases. There is need to plan for the orderly and efficient production of such materials.



# RANGE MANAGEMENT

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



**Grazing on public land. Forage on public lands provides a significant supplement for the livestock of over 250 ranchers in the Casper District. Intensive livestock management in the form of Allotment Management Plans (AMP s) will maximize forage production.**

### Program Description

The range management program includes inventory, evaluation and management of the forage resource on public lands. The program involves authorizing and supervising grazing use, developing and maintaining supporting livestock management facilities and protecting the range from weed infestations, pests and diseases.

The history of livestock grazing in Wyoming goes back more than 100 years. Large ranching enterprises were among the first uses of public lands in Wyoming. Many ranching families acquired ownership of the surface, but not the mineral rights, of federal land through the Stock Raising Homestead Act of 1916. Much of the original public land in the Casper District went into private ownership under this law, which partially accounts for the scattered federal surface ownership pattern and for the fact that the district administers a large percentage of the minerals beneath privately owned surface.

### Resource Description

Forage for livestock grazing in the planning unit is one of the most significant renewable resources on the public lands. It contributes to the economic stability of 254 ranch operations. Most of the land administered by BLM in the area is grazed by domestic livestock some time during the year.

Projects, such as water developments and pasture and allotment boundary fencing, will be needed for grazing system implementation.

Missouri River Basin studies in north-eastern Wyoming — including the planning area — reveal that only 50 percent of the public lands have adequate livestock water.

Public lands produce 2.8 percent of the area's required livestock forage. Livestock forage produced in the area in 1969 totaled 2,421,989 Animal Unit Months (AUMs). Of that total, then, 68,425 AUMs were produced on public lands. The AUM figure seems insignificant until you consider the dependency a year long ranching operation has on these lands. In numerous cases these lands are used during a time crucial to the ranching operation.

### Multiple Use Objective

Manage areas suitable for allotment management plans to increase livestock forage and improve both watershed and wildlife habitat. Maintain areas designated for custodial management in a satisfactory condition.



## Multiple Use Decisions

1. **Develop 60 Allotment Management Plans (AMPs) Prior to an Environmental Statement on Livestock Grazing.**  
(See Range map.)

Allocate sufficient forage to meet demands of wildlife and livestock numbers at the time this plan is developed. Any additional forage developed as a result of intensive management, after allocations to protect watershed, will be divided equally between livestock and wildlife.

The remainder of the public lands will be managed on a custodial basis. No intensive grazing management for forage will be undertaken unless in conjunction with a cooperative plan initiated by the rancher. Some areas managed on a custodial basis for livestock forage may be intensively managed for wildlife habitat, recreation, minerals development or some other use identified in this land use plan.

**Rationale:** A Natural Resources Defense Council-Bureau of Land Management agreement calls for preparation of environmental statements on all BLM grazing areas. Allotment management plans will constitute the proposed actions to be analyzed in the statements.

2. **Weed Control.**

Establish a weed control program in cooperation with county weed and pest control boards for control of noxious weeds and poisonous plants on public lands and adjoining private land.

**Rationale:** Weed control is becoming increasingly important as human populations increase. Noxious weeds from public lands can spread onto private land.

3. **Protect Streams from Damages Resulting From Grasshopper Spraying.**

If grasshopper infestations develop on public lands and threaten crops or forage, cooperate with local, state, and federal agencies on control measures. All grasshopper control programs on public lands will be monitored by BLM to ensure compliance with stipulations.

**Rationale:** Grasshopper control is necessary in some areas to prevent severe damage to livestock forage and the watershed.

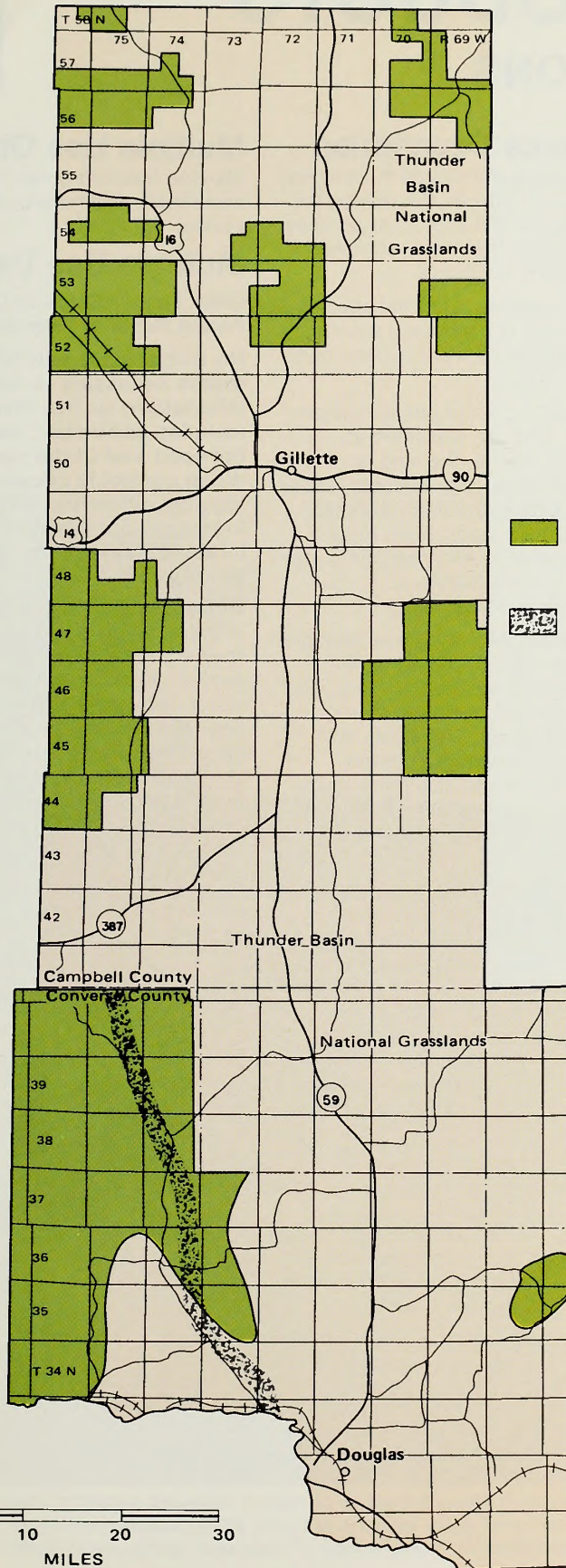
4. **Study Orpha Stock Driveway Use.**  
(See Range map.)


Determine if Orpha Stock Driveway is serving its original purpose. Revoke the driveway reservation if no need is found. Complete action by September 30, 1978.


**Rationale:** The Orpha Stock Driveway is little used and is not a continuous trail on public lands. A county road traverses the length of the trail and is readily available for movement of livestock. Administratively, it would be easier to handle public lands in this area if the driveway reservation were revoked.

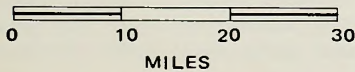


# RANGE MAP 1



 Intensive Livestock Management Areas  
(See Range Decision 1)

 Orpha Stock Driveway (See Range  
Decision 4, to be Studied)





# FOREST PRODUCTS

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



### Program Description

The forestry program includes inventory, evaluation, custodial management and fire control on the district's forest resources. The program's primary objective is to sustain the timber stands for watershed protection as cover and habitat for wildlife. BLM conducts limited timber sales for local timber, posts and poles and other vegetative products. Timber trespass is controlled as are forest pests, mainly the mountain pine beetle and diseases will be controlled only when and where they adversely affect other resource values.

### Resource Description

The forested public lands in Campbell County are scattered throughout the north, central and southeast portions of the county. Therefore, effective management is difficult.

The only commercial forest species in the county is ponderosa pine. Rocky Mountain juniper is also found on public lands.

Some 3,000 acres of ponderosa pine on public land are classified as productive; that is, the land is capable of producing 20 cubic feet of wood an acre every year. Another 11,300 acres support trees but are not capable of much production. This acreage is classified as nonproductive forest land.

All forested public lands are valuable for wildlife habitat, protection of watershed and aesthetics. Deer, elk, small game and birds use these areas extensively. Tree roots hold soil in place, helping to control erosion. The shade also helps delay snowmelt. This lengthens the run-off period and also helps curtail soil erosion.

Trees are aesthetically valuable because they provide variety in an otherwise monotonous countryside throughout much of Campbell County. The timber itself is usually of only fair quality. This is due in part to the lack of growth. Stand density is usually poor to fair (less than 300 trees per acre) except in the northern portion where it is good (more than 300 trees per acre).

Forest regeneration is poor for most of the forested acres with the exception of the northernmost part.

No areas containing commercial quality forest products were identified in northern Converse County.

*Note: Forestry map deleted since decision actually refers to entire planning area.*

### Multiple Use Objective

Manage forested areas for watershed, wildlife and aesthetic values.

### Multiple Use Decision

**Offer Timber Sales to Control Forest Pests or Diseases.**

**No timber sales will be conducted unless necessary to control insect infestations or tree diseases. This includes sawtimber, posts, poles, firewood and Christmas trees. When control is necessary, logging will be the first choice. If logging is not feasible, the infested trees will be cut, piled and burned.**

**Rationale:** Due to sparseness of the timbered areas in Campbell County, they are more important for wildlife habitat, aesthetic values and watershed protection than for wood-fiber production. Therefore, no timber harvesting will take place in these stands except to control disease and insects (mostly mountain pine beetles).





Scattered products of Rocky Mountain juniper in western Campbell County. There is no commercially loggable timber in the planning unit. Since the forested public land has a higher value for watershed protection and wildlife habitat, BLM will not authorize timber sales unless necessary to control insect infestations or diseases.



# WATERSHED

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



**The watershed condition in the Powder River Breaks in western Campbell County needs protection. Currently erosion in the area threatens to degrade the Breaks into frail lands.**

### Program Description

Management of watersheds is essentially the management of land for the conservation and production of renewable natural resources. It is concerned with relationships between the management of soil, vegetation and the quality, quantity and timing of water production from watersheds as they affect both on-site and downstream use. Management involves prescribing some kind of land use, non use or modification of vegetative cover.

### Resource Description

The trend of watershed conditions in Campbell County seems to be downward, especially in the Powder River Breaks. The Breaks are mainly badlands which are produced by the geological erosion process. This erosion process in the Breaks can be accelerated by most types of surface disturbance. There is a distinct possibility that the Breaks could degrade from a natural low-quality watershed to a frail lands area if accelerated erosion is allowed to continue.

The main contributors to accelerated erosion are poor forage management practices and mineral activity. Geological erosion is difficult to control. However, there are ways to lessen accelerated erosion and improve areas where this erosion has lowered watershed quality. The ways include: intensive livestock management, protective stipulations on mineral activities and land treatment such as chemical control of sagebrush, watershed tillage and construction of water control devices.

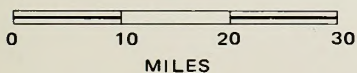
Chemical control would eliminate stands of sagebrush which have increased over the past few decades and have lowered watershed quality. Watershed tillage and construction of water control devices would improve watershed by lessening erosive runoff and increasing the infiltration rate of moisture for desired vegetation.



# WATERSHED MAP 1



- Dead Horse Creek (See Decisions 2 and 3)
- Twenty Mile Creek (See Decisions 2,3, and 4)
- Pumpkin Creek (See Decision 2)
- Big Willow Creek (See Decision 2)



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**Watershed and range management practices often are mutually supportive. Therefore, BLM will implement watershed management only in areas where intensive livestock management in the form of Allotment Management Plans have been implemented.**

Watershed trend in Converse County is generally stable, with some areas in a declining condition. Most areas on the flanks of the mountains and in the northern part of the county are well vegetated and stable. Proper livestock management and surface reclamation after mineral production will preserve this condition.

Central Converse County has an extensive area of sand dunes. This area is in generally good condition but is very sensitive and must be managed carefully.

## **Multiple Use Objectives**

Manage the watershed for stabilization of soil resources, maintenance or restoration of soil productivity, enhancement of water yield and quality and reduction of flood and sediment damage. Reduce impacts to watershed values through stipulations in authorizations of other resource activities.

## **Multiple Use Decisions**

### **1. Establish Livestock Management Prior to Watershed Treatments.**

**Management systems will be so designed that livestock can be removed from treated areas for two consecutive growing seasons.**

**Rationale:** To ensure treatment success and improve the cost-benefit ratio of mechanical and chemical treatment, livestock must be intensively managed. Opportunities for watershed improvement are available with mechanical and chemical treatment of some areas, but without intensive livestock management the effectiveness of the treatment is lowered and the cost will exceed the benefit. If cost exceeds benefits, treatment is not attempted. The opportunity for watershed improvement will then be lost and erosion will continue.



**2. Construct Water Control Devices.**

(See Watershed map.)

Construct water control devices to reduce runoff and control erosion on 11,060 acres of public lands in four watersheds. Construct the devices in Big Willow Creek (2,400 acres), Pumpkin Creek (3,800 acres), Twenty Mile Creek (2,740 acres), and Dead Horse Creek (2,120 acres) watersheds. To ensure success, livestock management systems will be implemented prior to construction.

**Rationale:** Conditions can be improved on these acres with the construction of water control devices which will lessen erosion by controlling runoff. Control of runoff will lessen rill and gully erosion which is the most serious problem on watersheds.

**3. Conduct watershed tillage to lower soil loss and improve infiltration on 2,280 acres of public lands in two watersheds.**  
(See Watershed map.)

The two watershed areas, Twenty Mile Creek (800 acres) and Dead Horse Creek (1,480 acres), will be managed for livestock prior to any tillage to ensure success of treatment and improve the cost-benefit ratio.

**Rationale:** Watershed tillage will control runoff, increase soil infiltration rate, improve water holding capacity and increase vegetative cover which will stabilize soil condition and reduce soil loss.

**4. Rehabilitate Mined Land with Soils Suitable to Restore Vegetation.**

Rehabilitation will include covering mined land with soils suitable for restoration of vegetation. Explanation: Where possible, areas disturbed will be rehabilitated with at least 16 inches of surface material suitable for the growth of perennial vegetation. The surface material should also have water-holding capacity of at least .125 inches per inch of depth, be capable of supplying the macro- and micro-nutrients needed for proper plant growth and be free of any toxic materials that would retard such growth. Such soil material to be stockpiled for longer than 10 months will be reseeded to protect it from erosion by wind and water.

**Rationale:** To assure proper rehabilitation of mined areas, there must be an adequate depth of surface material suitable for plant growth to supply enough water and nutrients and be free of growth-retarding toxic elements. Many soils in the county are low in fertility and may need to be fertilized with macro- and micro-nutrients to bring the growing media to the proper fertility status.

The average annual precipitation for most of Campbell County is low. As a result, surface material must have a good water-holding capacity to supply moisture needed for revegetation.

The reseeded of soil material to be stockpiled for longer than 10 months will help prevent the loss of the material from erosion. It is important to protect as much of the soil material as possible to ensure that proper plant growing media are available for successful rehabilitation of mined areas.



# RECREATION

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



Potential public fishing area. BLM will work with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to establish public fishing areas on reservoirs such as this. This photo also shows the high quality waterfowl habitat that BLM will manage through a habitat management plan.

### Program Description

The public lands in the Casper District have the potential for a wide range of recreational uses, such as hunting, fishing, camping, picnicking, rockhounding, sightseeing, river floating and many other outdoor activities. BLM's program to preserve and protect valuable cultural resources is also part of the recreation program.

BLM provides such things as public access to recreation areas, resource protection and visitor control, public information and interpretation and facilities such as campgrounds, hiking trails, floatboat landings and interpretative facilities.

### Resource Description

Because there is little federal surface in the unit for actual development, the recreation program concentrates mostly on protection of visual and cultural resources.

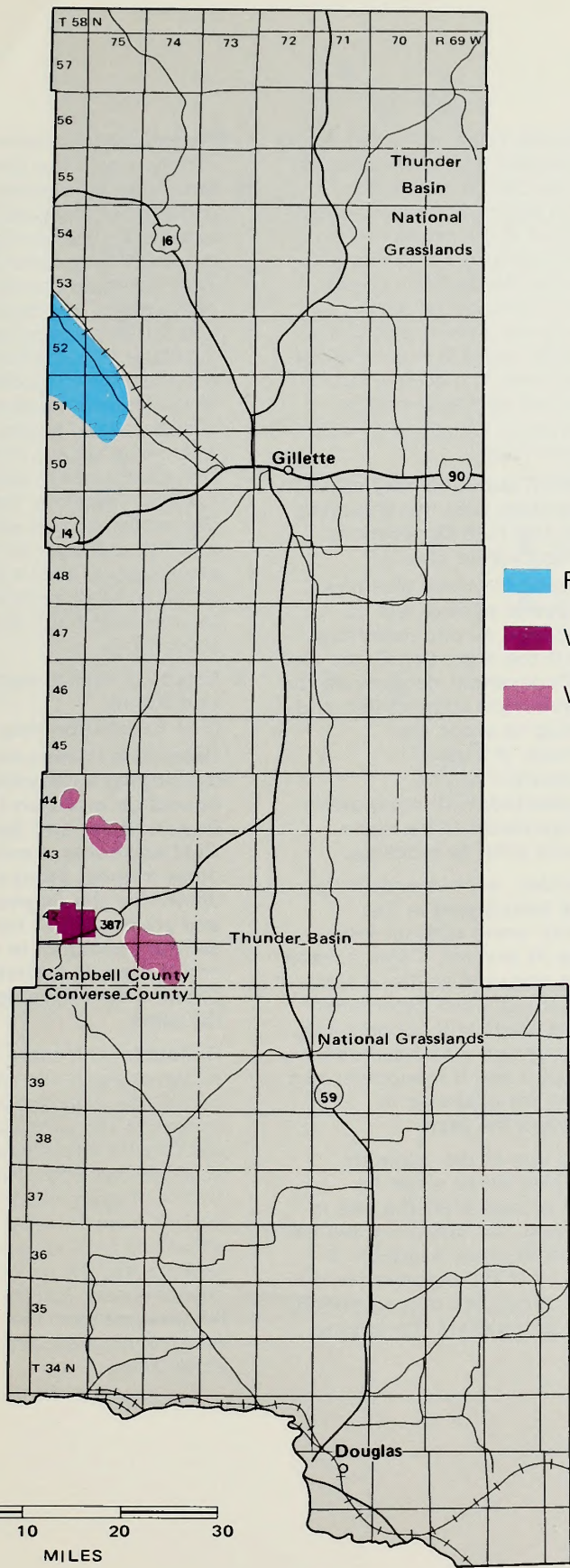
Demand for outdoor recreation will probably increase 50 to 60 percent by 1990, and so some program efforts are being directed toward limited development on scattered tracts. Emphasis of the program is on a quality environmental experience for the public rather than on highly-developed recreation areas.

Scattered fisheries development is being considered, as well as exchange of public and private tracts to achieve sufficiently large blocks of public lands for public use without undue impact on adjoining private land. In addition, tracts are being made available to local governments under terms of the Recreation and Public Purposes Act. (See Lands Decision #2.)

The North Platte River is of major interest for recreation. However, tracts of public lands adjoining state land administered by the Wyoming Game and Fish Department will be managed as landing sites for river float trips. Additional landing areas may be acquired through land exchanges with private individuals.



# RECREATION MAP 1



- Fortification Creek Area
- Visual Class I Area (Pumpkin Buttes)
- Visual Class II Area (Pumpkin Buttes)



## Multiple Use Objective

Maintain the recreational use on public lands, while making appropriate lands available for recreation development by local governments, as needed. Also, identify and reduce adverse impacts on cultural resources.

## Multiple Use Decisions

### 1. Reduce Visual Impacts in Mineral Development Areas. (See Recreation map 1.)

The following general restraints will apply:

- a. To the extent possible, roads will follow natural contours, with slopes reduced to permit revegetation;
- b. Powerlines and pipelines will use corridors where possible;
- c. When feasible, natural vegetation and topographic features will be used to screen development on and in BLM's Visual Resource Management Classes I and II (Pumpkin Buttes).

In addition, all visual intrusions authorized by BLM and the U.S. Geological Survey in Visual Resource Management Class I areas and Fortification Creek, such as pumps, tanks, silos, pipelines, powerlines, fences, corrals and associated structures, will be painted to be environmentally compatible. Colors will be determined by the district manager and acceptable to engineering standards.

**Rationale:** Visual intrusions due to management and developmental activities can be minimized through these stipulations. Areas described in the decision — Fortification Creek and Visual Resource Management Class I Areas — are special areas primarily because of lack of such intrusions, and are in a somewhat natural state at this time. Scenic values can be maintained by stipulation of mitigating measures for these sites.

### 2. Establish public fishing areas in cooperation with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. (See Recreation map 2.)

Ten reservoir areas that now have public access will be established as public fishing areas if the Wyoming Game and Fish Department determines the reservoirs will support fish and is willing to stock the reservoirs. A plan of development will be implemented, with manpower for supervision to be made available prior to stocking.

In addition, access acquisition will be considered in five reservoir areas without legal access at present. Legal access will be acquired at these sites only if it has been determined that the areas will support fish, if a recreation plan has been developed and if manpower and funding are available to implement the plan.

Should any of the minerals underlying these areas be leased or sold after the site is developed, the company will be required to make available a comparable fishing area for the public during the mining period and to rehabilitate the original site.

**Rationale:** Most fishing within the county is on a few private ponds. More sites are needed to provide fisheries for a population increase expected in the county as a result of energy development activities. With increased fishing participation predicted statewide, it is extremely important to distribute as much fishing opportunity as possible on public lands. However, undue hardship can be caused private landowners when legal access is established into small areas or attention drawn to them. Therefore, the reservoirs (Recreation map 2) will be stocked with fish and legal access will be acquired only after a plan is developed and funds are available for implementation and supervision.

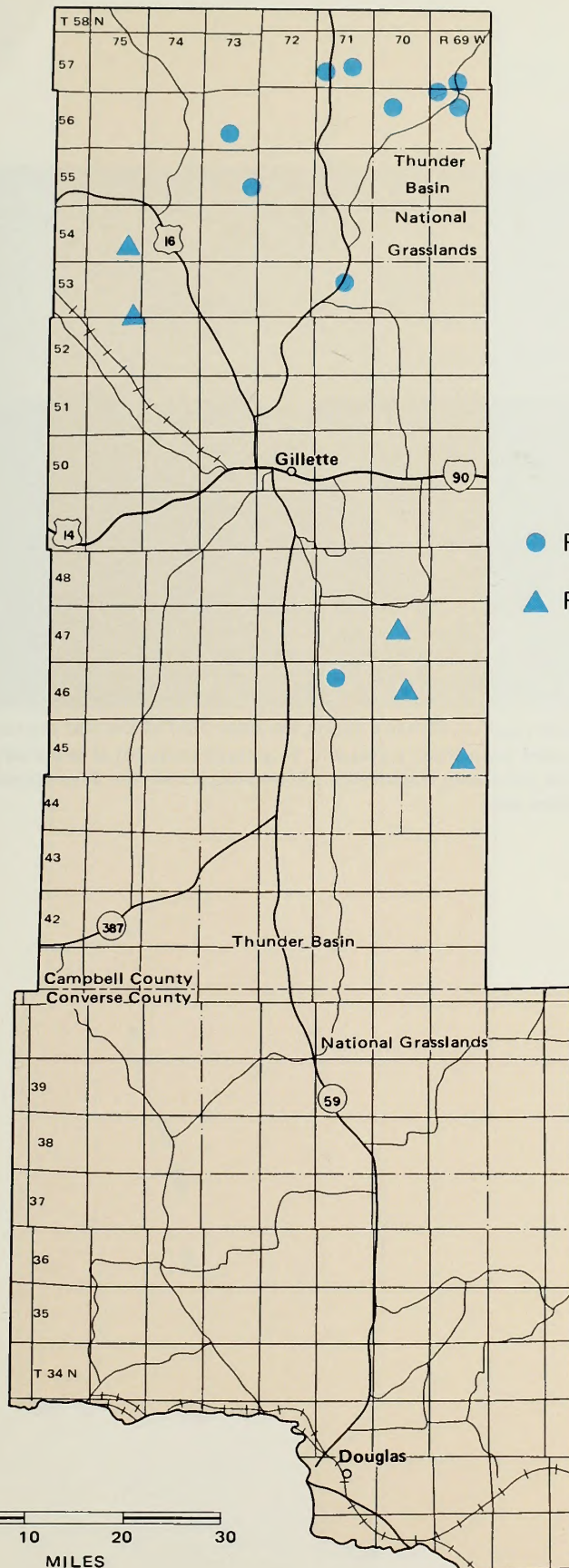
### 3. Establish Environmental Education Areas. (See Recreation map 3.)

Determine if there is support for developing environmental education areas on Little Powder River and Spring Creek. BLM will contact schools and other interest groups to determine the degree of local and state support for environmental education in these areas and if there is sufficient support proceed with development of the sites.

**Rationale:** The public lands shown on Recreation map 3 are suitable for environmental education and such use is valuable for educational and scientific purposes. However, such a program must have full support from the local community as well as from the community colleges and the university. If this support exists, activity plans will be developed and the environmental education sites established.



## RECREATION MAP 2





**4. Assess Bozeman Trail.**  
(See Recreation map 3.)

**Study the desirability of developing an interpretative program for Bozeman Trail sites. Preliminary reports should be completed three months after review and recommendation by the National Advisory Board on Historic Sites.**

**Rationale:** There are important historic sites along the Bozeman Trail which have been nominated to the National Register of Historic Places. If these sites are accepted for the register, a management plan should be prepared.

**5. Develop Recreation Management Plan for North Platte River.**  
(See Recreation map 3.)

**Prepare a recreation management plan for tracts of public lands adjacent to the North Platte River.**

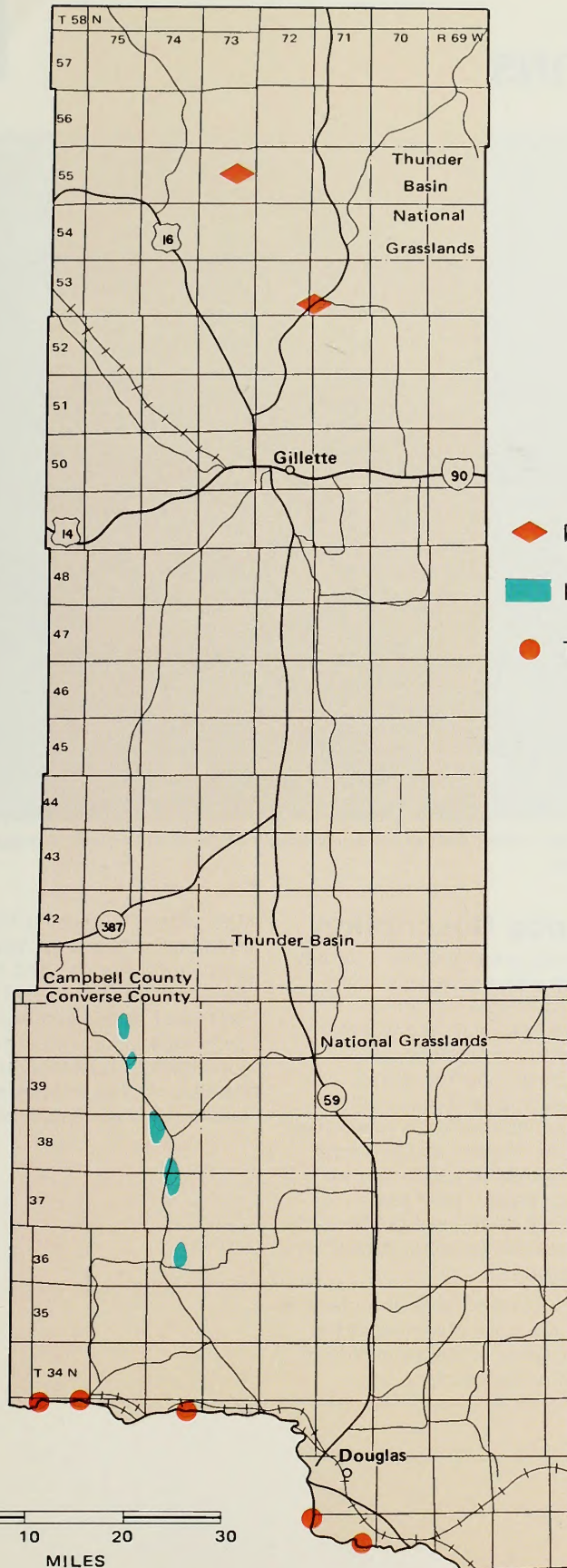
**Rationale:** Population increases in Converse County will place additional pressure on recreation areas. The North Platte River is a natural recreation site and will be used whether or not there is management. Proper guidance in the form of a recreation management plan for the river and associated public lands should be provided.






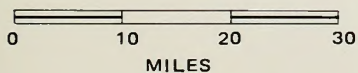
This was the road to Montana during the latter half of the last century. It was primarily used for military travel and as a stage route. BLM will study whether some of the remaining wagon ruts will be suitable for the development of interpretative sites.



# RECREATION MAP 3



-  Proposed Environmental Education Areas
-  Historic Sites on Bozemen Trail
-  Tracts of Public Land On North Platte River



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT



# WILDLIFE

## MANAGEMENT DECISIONS



The planning unit contains prime habitat for mule deer. Often deer graze surprisingly close to man-made energy structures and activities such as the oil tanks in the background.

### Program Description

The public lands provide a wide variety of important habitat for both terrestrial and aquatic wildlife. One of the largest pronghorn antelope herds in the world roams the planning area. Other important wildlife species include mule and whitetail deer, sage grouse, turkey, various birds of prey and waterfowl. The importance of fisheries habitat is increasing because of population growth within the planning area due to energy development activities. BLM works closely with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department on wildlife and fisheries habitat management.

### Resource Description

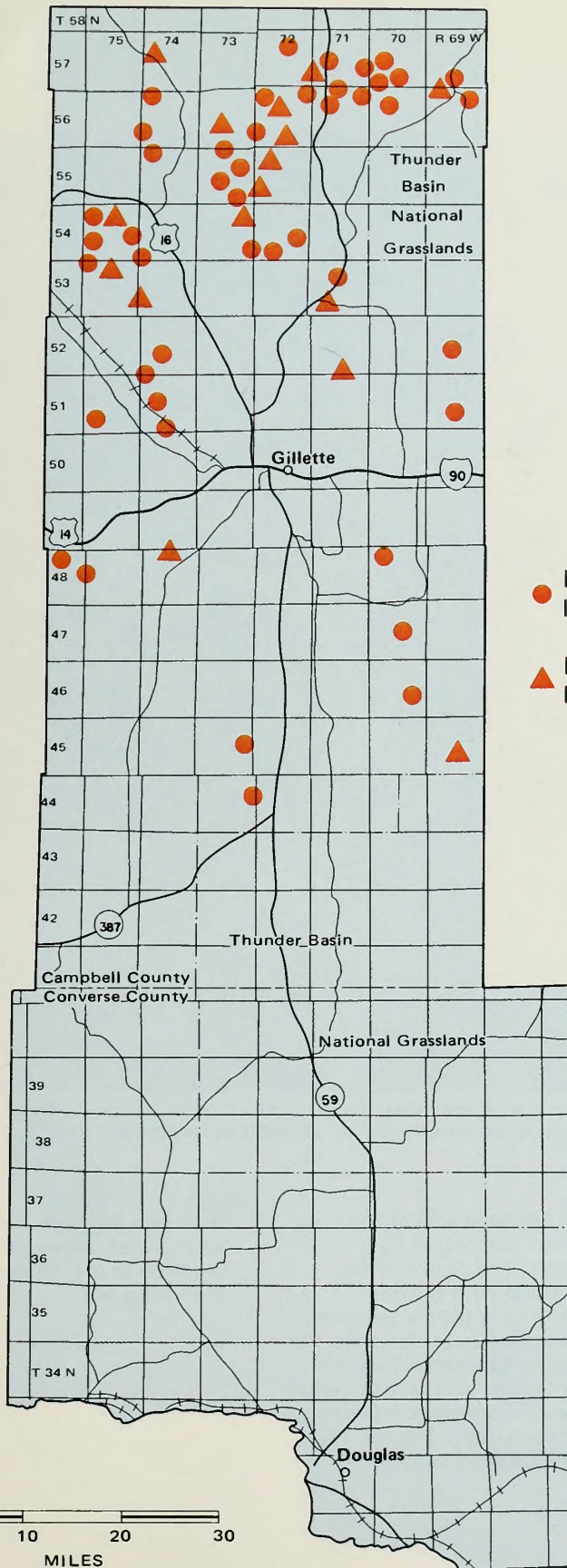
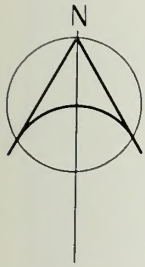
The planning area includes a variety of habitats with a diverse wildlife population. Pheasants, grouse, doves, turkeys, mule and whitetail deer, pronghorn antelope, elk, bighorn sheep, coyotes, foxes, bobcats, eagles, and many other small birds and mammals make their homes here. These habitats range from grasslands to sagebrush to coniferous forests. BLM has a responsibility to manage public lands for maintenance or improvement of their habitats.

Because of limited federal surface in the area, the main objective of the wildlife program is the protection of habitat on private surface from destruction as a result of federal action.

The district's Planning Area Analysis predicts increases in demand of 819 percent for hunting and 438 percent for fishing by 1990. BLM believes that most of this demand will be met on private lands and nearby national forest lands. However, some of the demand can be accommodated by public lands administered by BLM.



# WILDLIFE MAP 1



- Reservoirs For Potential Waterfowl Habitat Improvement
- ▲ Reservoirs For Potential Waterfowl Habitat Improvement with Island





Courting display of sage grouse. In early March male sage grouse inflate large brightly colored pouches around their necks to attract females. BLM will protect sage grouse strutting grounds by routing all rights-of-way around the areas if possible or by prohibiting use from March through June.

## Multiple Use Objective

Maintain existing wildlife habitat through development of habitat management plans and reduce adverse impact on wildlife habitat resulting from minerals development.

## Multiple Use Decisions

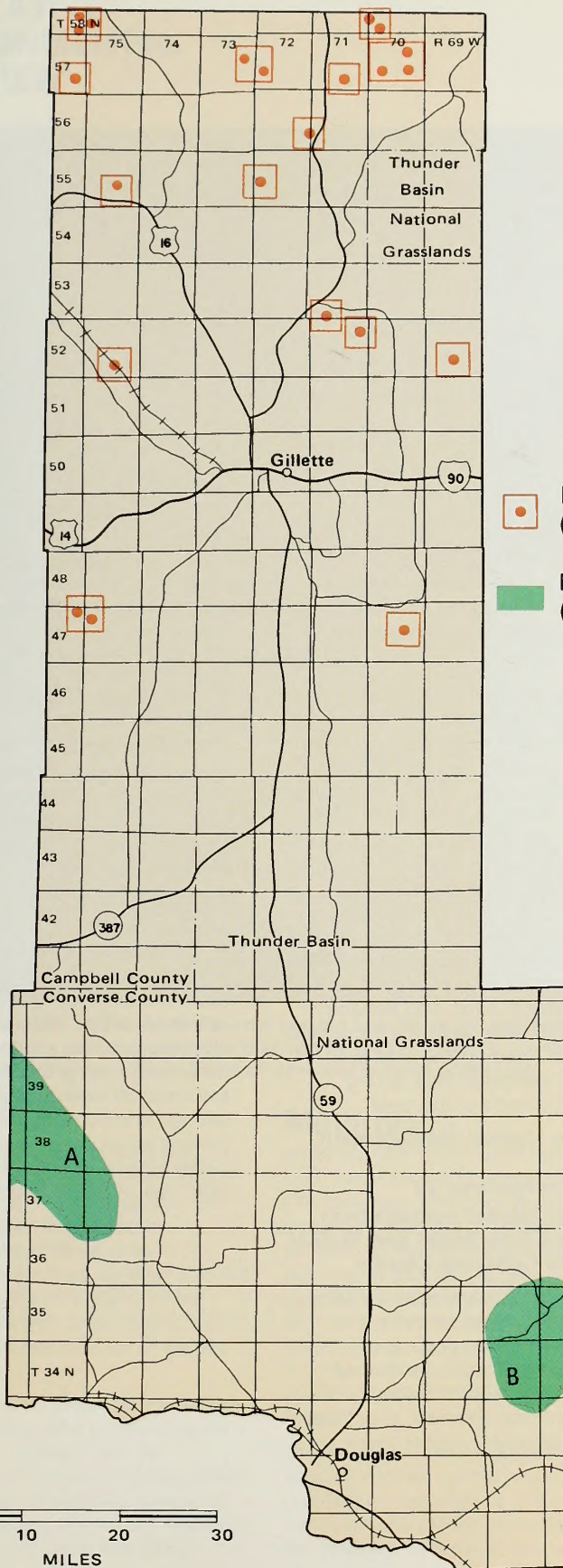
1. Protect Waterfowl Habitat.  
(See Wildlife map 1.)  
Develop a habitat management

plan to improve and protect waterfowl habitat on 62 reservoirs. The plan will be coordinated with grazing lessees and conflicts resolved. If advantageous to the plan, the shallow end of each reservoir will be fenced and planted with emergent vegetation. Islands will be constructed in the 17 reservoirs which have more

than two acres of surface. Any fenced areas will be enrolled in the "Acres for Wildlife" program.



## WILDLIFE MAP 2



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Should any of these sites be leased for mineral extraction, the lease will include the following stipulation: "The company will make available a comparable waterfowl area during the mining period, and rehabilitate the site to the same condition as prior to the mining."

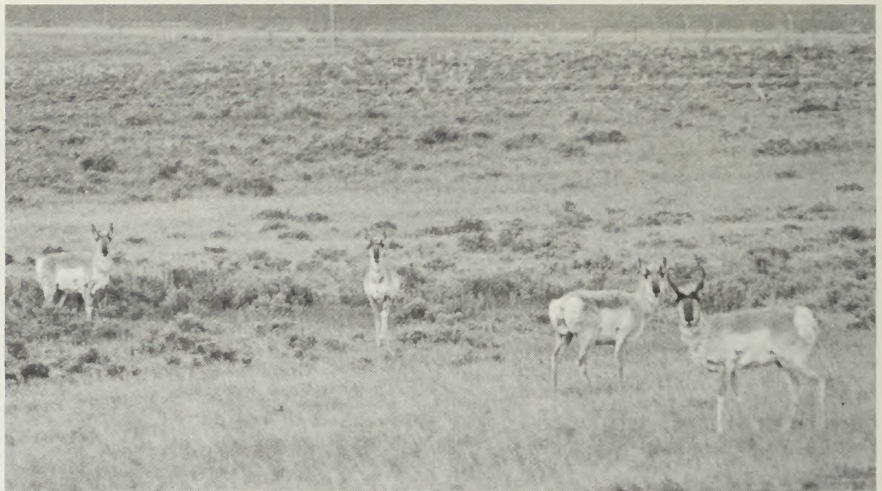
**Rationale:** Important waterfowl nesting habitat is often destroyed when livestock congregate near watering places. Fencing the shallow end of each reservoir will preserve this valuable resource and increase waterfowl habitat to help offset the increase in hunting pressure. Constructing islands in the larger reservoirs will protect nesting birds from predators.

## 2. Consider Fencing Alternatives. (See Wildlife map 2.)

**Develop habitat management plans for the protection of 25 isolated parcels of public lands containing riparian vegetation. Fencing and alternatives such as grazing systems will be considered.**

**One plan, involving 22 parcels and 1,420 acres is to be completed by 1980. An additional plan involving three parcels and 480 acres is to be completed by 1982.**

**The habitat management plans and environmental assessment will involve coordination with range users and the Wyoming Game and Fish Department.**



**Pronghorn antelope range throughout the planning unit. The world's largest herd of antelope roam in the Thunder Basin National Grasslands, a portion of which is located within the planning unit.**

**Rationale:** Riparian habitat degraded by livestock concentration should be improved to help meet projected demands for hunting in the area. The tracts are generally small and completely surrounded by private land, making livestock control by BLM impractical. This makes it necessary to closely coordinate this program with private landowners. Improved habitat will provide more nesting cover for upland game birds and provide hunting to help meet the increased demand. Fencing the area will exclude livestock only during certain periods of the year.

## 3. Prepare Habitat Management Plans. (See Wildlife map 2.)

**Develop habitat management plans for Pine Ridge and Walker Creek in Converse County.**

**Rationale:** These areas contain important habitat for deer and antelope. Human population increases will place increased demands on wildlife habitat. Improved management practices are necessary to offset these impacts.

## 4. Protect Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds. (See Minerals map 2.)

**Route all rights-of-way around sage grouse strutting grounds, if possible. If not, prohibit construction from March through June.**

**Rationale:** No occupancy or other surface disturbance within 250 yards of known sage grouse strutting grounds will be permitted March through June. Human activities within 250 yards of strutting grounds must be minimized during this time. Due to the national energy shortage, all energy related rights-of-way which cannot be routed around the buffer will be constructed only from July through February.



# CUMULATIVE ENVIRONMENTAL OVERVIEW



Of all the decisions in this brochure, coal leasing has the most significant environmental implications. BLM will analyze these implications and the measures that can be taken to lessen adverse impacts in an environmental statement assessing the regional and site-specific impacts of new coal leasing proposals.

## Lands

Lands decisions would stop the proliferation of transportation and utility rights-of-way throughout the area. They are formulated to encourage the orderly growth of communities such as Gillette and the new community of Wright, rather than development of company towns and camps in the vicinity of mining areas.

Scattered tracts would be managed by encouraging land exchanges for these tracts, use of them for recreation and public purposes when they are near developing towns, or public sale when significant resource values have not been identified.

## Minerals

Minerals decisions would result in both beneficial and adverse impacts. For example, the coal leasing decisions (subject to the findings of an environmental assessment) would put into production large amounts of coal for electrical power generation. Significant increases in employment would occur, along with increases in income and local tax revenues. Development of new services would follow.

On the other hand, housing would be scarce, mobile homes would proliferate, the cost of living would increase and public services would be strained, at least in the short run.

Decisions relative to oil and gas would encourage mineral exploration and development while protecting wildlife and habitat. Less than one percent of the public land has a "no-surface occupancy" restriction.

These decisions took into account the protection of important habitat for elk, deer, antelope and sage grouse by partial or total restriction of mineral production activity. However, mineral development will cause short-term and some long-term destruction of wildlife habitat, mostly in the Wyodak-Anderson coal seam area.



## **Range**

Range decisions would maximize use of forage on public lands and minimize environmental damage. Some fences may obstruct wildlife movement. Location of water developments will favor wildlife needs.

## **Forestry**

Forestry decisions would cause very little impact and result in only minor surface disturbance, minimal visual disruption and some temporary disturbance to wildlife.

## **Watershed**

Minimal impact would result from such watershed decisions as re-routing rights-of-way from critical areas thereby slightly increasing maintenance needs or increasing construction costs to prevent erosion. Beneficial impacts expected to result are decreases in soil erosion and maintenance of quality water.

## **Recreation**

Beneficial impacts expected from the recreation decisions are maintenance of aesthetic quality along highways in the planning unit, preservation of historic values along the Bozeman Trail and increased capacity for recreational fishing.

No significant adverse impacts are expected.

## **Wildlife**

Wildlife decisions would benefit habitat and minimize adverse impacts on wildlife species. They assure protection and improvement of significant wildlife habitat such as big game winter ranges, as well as nesting and strutting areas. Recommendations specifically consider vegetative cover, potential surface or noise disturbance, critical water sources and management of livestock as it affects wildlife habitat. Some adverse impact will be caused by restriction of mineral development, both seasonal and permanent.



## INTERRELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PLANS

A special effort was made to coordinate this plan with other federal, state and local government agencies. This was to ensure that BLM planning efforts and management decisions do not conflict with land use plans of other agencies.

Governmental entities consulted during the planning process included federal agencies such as the Forest Service, Soil Conservation Service, Bureau of Reclamation, Geological Survey and the Fish and Wildlife Service; Wyoming state and county agencies such as the Game and Fish Department, Highway Department, Department of Agriculture, Land Use Planning Commission, Campbell County Commissioners, Campbell County Planning Commission, Converse County Commissioners, Converse County Planning Commission, Gillette and Douglas city administrators and numerous others. Adjacent BLM Districts were consulted to ensure interdistrict coordination.

Many of these decisions would have significant on- and off-site implications affecting other agencies. Major decisions relative to coal development could foreseeably affect every agency mentioned above.

For some government organizations, coal development on a large scale would no doubt create very significant workloads, especially for the Wyoming State Department of Environmental Quality and the U.S. Geological Survey.

Decisions to make public lands available for public purposes should benefit local government concerned with recreation needs in several communities in the unit. Livestock grazing will affect agencies such as the Soil Conservation Service,



**Comparing coal data. The U.S. Geological Survey (USGS) and BLM work together to determine where additional coal leasing should be advocated. Here Casper District's mining engineer, Don Zoss, confers with Bill Rohrer and Nancy Micklich of the USGS in Casper.**

Wyoming State Land Board and Forest Service, who work with the same range users under their various areas of jurisdiction. Range management practices affect wildlife populations either beneficially or adversely, and this is of direct interest to the Wyoming Game and Fish Department. Existing procedures call for cooperative planning on range management by all agencies involved.

Wildlife management decisions have been coordinated closely with the Wyoming Game and Fish Department to ensure that habitat management is coordinated with objectives for each wildlife species.

These are examples of the coordination which has taken place on some of the major issues. Almost all decisions in this MFP affect other government organizations and their land use plans.



## ACTIONS AFTER THE MFP

This booklet discusses the final management framework plan decisions for Campbell and northern Converse counties.

This plan will be followed by on-the-ground actions. These actions are subject to the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act. An environmental assessment is prepared for each action whether it is initiated by others or the BLM. If the impacts are unacceptable, the proposed action may be modified or rejected.

Areas to be analyzed for possible coal leasing will be the subject of an environmental statement assessing the possible impact.

Implementation of on-the-ground actions initiated by BLM is contingent upon the necessary funding by Congress. It may be some time before some of these decisions are implemented.

Any major changes in this plan will be subject to public review and comment.







## PHOTO CREDITS

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# GLOSSARY

As in most systems, BLM's Planning System has its own "language." To help you understand some of the terms used in this brochure, a glossary is included for reference:

**Acres for Wildlife Program:** A Wyoming Game and Fish Department program whereby an enrolled tract of land is designated solely for wildlife use.

**Adjudicating Mineral Patents:** The legal processing of mineral patent applications to assure full compliance with public land laws and regulations.

**Allotment Management Plan (AMP):** A written plan for the management of livestock grazing designed to attain prescribed goals for each grazing allotment (a parcel of public lands assigned to a grazing lessee). Each AMP is prepared in cooperation with the livestock operator. AMPs establish grazing use patterns or systems to stimulate the growth of the desired vegetation.

**Animal Unit Month (AUM):** A measure of forage or feed required to maintain one cow or 5 sheep one month. The AUM is primarily used in measuring the amount of forage on public lands.

**Badlands:** A region nearly devoid of vegetation where erosion, instead of carving hills and valleys of the ordinary type, has cut the land into an intricate maze of narrow ravines and sharp crests and pinnacles.

**Bentonite:** A clay formed from volcanic ash that has great ability to absorb or adsorb water and to swell accordingly. Used in drilling mud, taconite production and in the foundry industry. Most of the bentonite consumed by the rest of the world is produced in Wyoming.

**Coal Lease:** A legal contract between the federal government and the coal developer granting the developer the right to mine federal coal upon payment of an agreed rental, bonus and for royalty. Coal leasing regulations are based on the Mineral Leasing Act of 1920 and the Federal Coal Leasing Amendments Act of 1976.

**Custodial Livestock Management:** Minimum regulations of grazing on

public lands. Special stipulations will be added to grazing leases only when needed to prevent damage to public lands.

**Economically Strippable, Low-Sulfur Coal:** Coal with a low-sulfur content that can be economically and legally mined by existing surface mining techniques. The U.S. Geological Survey has determined that all coal that has less than 4½ cubic yards of overburden (earth, soil or rock above the coal being mined) over one ton of coal is economically strippable at this time.

**Energy Transmission and Transportation Corridors:** A strip of land where energy related electrical lines and pipelines can be consolidated to restrict impacts to certain predetermined areas.

**Environmental Statement (ES):** A document prepared in response to the National Environmental Policy Act of 1969. The ES assesses the impacts of a proposed action on the quality of the human environment. It also identifies mitigating measures that can be employed to reduce adverse impacts. The ES is a tool that decision-makers use to weigh the environmental consequences of a proposed action.

**Federal Land Policy and Management Act of 1976:** A comprehensive federal law combining and consolidating many archaic and often conflicting federal land management laws. It is the first clear cut mandate Congress has ever given to the Bureau of Land Management for managing the 473 million acres of public lands under its jurisdiction. Also called the BLM Organic Act.

**Forage:** Plants available to and chosen for consumption by grazing animals.

**Groundwater Recharge:** Movement of water from the earth's surface to underground bodies of water (aquifers).

**Habitat Management Plan (HMP):** A BLM activity plan designed for a specific area to achieve maximum wildlife production.

**Land Exchange:** Trading of public lands (with or without subsurface rights) for lands in other ownerships which have value for public use, management and enjoyment. An exchange may be for the benefit of other federal agencies as well as BLM.

**Livestock Management Plan:** A range management system whereby livestock numbers and season of use is designated through an allotment management plan (AMP).

**Management Framework Plan (MFP):** A planning decision document which establishes, for a given planning area, land use allocations, coordination guidelines for multiple use and management objectives to be achieved for each class of land use or protection. It is the Bureau's Land Use Plan. It is prepared in three steps: Step One—Resource Recommendations; Step Two—Impact Analysis and Alternative Development; and Step Three—Decisionmaking.

**Mitigation:** A modification to lessen the negative results or increase the beneficial aspects of a proposed action. Mitigation is a critical element in environmental statements.

**Multiple Use Management:** A philosophy designed to enable public



lands to be managed for as many uses simultaneously as practical. This philosophy recognizes diverse needs of the public and tries to relate these needs to the various resource values on the land.

**National Environmental Policy Act of 1969 (NEPA):** This act requires that federal agencies consider and document the environmental impact of proposed legislation or actions that would have a significant effect on the quality of the human environment. Regulations promulgated by the Council on Environmental Quality require environmental statements to comply with this law.

**Noxious Weeds:** A weed defined by state law as being especially undesirable, troublesome or difficult to control.

**Perennial Stream:** A stream that flows all the time.

**Planning Area:** One or more complete planning units for which a land use plan is to be prepared.

**Planning Area Analysis:** This document analyzes requirements of the public now and in the future for lands, and renewable and non-renewable resources. It shows the significance of the lands within a planning area to users, operators, the community and region. It is based on data in the URA, Socio-Economic Profile, and other regional information.

**Planning Unit:** A portion of a Bureau of Land Management district used for assembling resource inventory data. For each planning unit the district manager prepares a Unit Resource Analysis.

**Public Sale (Bureau Motion):** Sale of public land initiated by BLM. The specific tract must be identified in management plans as having no public values or that it cannot be managed due to isolation within other non-federal holdings. Public sale is by auction to the highest bidder at or above the appraised value.

**Recreation and Public Purposes Act (R&PP):** An act passed by Congress on June 14, 1926, which allows for the disposal of public lands

to certain governmental agencies or other qualified organizations for recreational or public purpose needs.

**Reclamation of Mined Land:** The process of returning mined lands to a stable condition and form consistent with their pre-mining productivity and use or other approved post-mining land use. Also called rehabilitation.

**Riparian Habitat:** Natural wildlife abode situated on or pertaining to the bank of a river, stream or other body of water.

**Sage Grouse Strutting Grounds:** A specific area where sage grouse congregate to perform courtship displays during breeding season.

**Sanitary Landfills:** Land used for disposing of solid municipal or industrial waste such as garbage, paper, sludge, cans, glass or other disposable items. Disposal is accomplished through placement in trenches and covered with soil. Landfills may be located on land where additional filling is needed prior to converting the land to other uses.

**Sedimentation:** The deposition of eroded soil particles in and around areas containing slow moving or soil water.

**Short-Term Criteria Coal Leasing:** Coal leasing necessary to maintain operations for an existing coal mine or where the coal is needed as a reserve for production in the near future.

**Socio-Economic Profile:** An information document for use in plan preparation. It describes the human populations in terms of social and economic factors. It also provides a checklist of other state and federal agencies to be consulted. It analyzes and records data relating to a relatively large region or area sharing similar socio-economic characteristics. A region may be a group of entire, adjoining counties, or it may approximate a district. It includes several Planning Areas.

**Stocking Rate:** In range management, the area of land allotted to each animal unit for the grazable period of the year expressed in acres per animal unit month.

**Stock Driveway:** A reservation of public lands for public use in moving livestock.

**Unit Resource Analysis (URA):** A basic source of information on the land and its resources, consisting of:

- Base Map

- Physical Profile

- Resource Inventory Summaries

- Resource potential and capability of the land to fill the public's needs for these activities: lands, minerals, recreation, wildlife, watershed, forest products and range management.

- Ecological Profile: a description and an analysis of the existing state of the ecosystems in the planning system.

**Upland Game Birds:** Game birds whose habitat is not associated with bodies of water. Examples are: sage grouse, pheasants and partridges.

**Visual Resource Management:** BLM's system designed to maintain or enhance the aesthetic values on specific tracts of public land.

**Water Control Devices:** Man-made structures used to detain or retain surface water, thereby preventing or reducing runoff damages due to erosion, including devices such as diversion ditches, detention dams, waterbars and water spreaders.

**Watershed:** The land surface contained within a natural surface water drainage system. Watersheds are delineated by a drainage device.

**Watershed Tillage:** Mechanical treatment of the surface for the purposes of decreasing surface runoff, increasing soil infiltration or decreasing erosion.

**Wyodak-Anderson Coal Seam:** A thick layer of low sulfur coal running generally from northern Converse County to northern Campbell County. Most of the seam can be economically strip mined. The Wyodak-Anderson seam contains approximately 19 billion tons of coal under 155,000 acres.



# COMMENT SHEET

District Manager  
Bureau of Land Management  
Casper, Wyoming 82601

Following are my comments regarding the Eastern Powder River Basin Land Use Plan:

(tear here)

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_



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WYOMING  
STATE OFFICE**

P.O. Box 1828  
2515 Warren  
Cheyenne, Wyoming 82001  
Phone 778-2220-2326

**DISTRICT OFFICES**

**Rock Springs District Office**

P.O. Box 1088  
Highway 187N  
Rock Springs, WY 82901  
307-362-6613

**\*Green River Resource Area**

**Pinedale Resource Area**

P.O. Box 768  
Molyneux Bldg.  
Pinedale, WY 82941  
307-367-4358

**Kemmerer Resource Area**

P.O. Box 632  
Kemmerer, WY 83101  
307-877-3933

**Worland District Office**

P.O. Box 119  
1700 Robertson Ave.  
Worland, WY 82401  
307-347-6151

**\*Shoshone Resource Area**

**\*Washakie Resource Area**

\*Located at District Office

**Rawlins District Office**

P.O. Box 670  
1300 3rd Street  
Rawlins, WY 82301  
307-324-6621

**\*Divide Resource Area**

**\*Medicine Bow Resource Area**

**Lander Resource Area**

P.O. Box 589  
Lander, WY 82520  
307-332-4220

**Casper District Office**

951 Union Blvd.  
Casper, WY 82601  
307-265-5550, ext. 5101

**\*Platte River Resource Area**

**Buffalo Resource Area**

P.O. Box 670  
Buffalo, WY 82834  
307-684-5586



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